











HOME!

OR

THE PILGRIMS' FAITH REVIVED.

BY

CHARLES T. TORREY.

Written during his incarceration in Baltimore Jail, after his conviction, and while awaiting—his sentence.

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' Aye, call it holy ground,  
The land whereon they trod ;  
They left unstained what there they found,  
Freedom to worship God.'

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PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS FAMILY.

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## P R E F A C E .

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A GOOD book needs none; and the best preface cannot improve a bad one. Friend! The writer is the inmate of a prison cell. Months ago, while in freedom, I agreed to prepare a volume for a Sunday School Society, designed to illustrate the causes of the decay, and the means of a revival of piety in the church and the individual mind. Its illustrations were to be drawn in part, from the history of the Puritan churches of New England, and in part, from such records of experience as every observing Christian treasures up, in his journey towards his Heavenly Home. It was to be a *book of principles*, with enough of illustration by incident and narrative to show their value and application to our duty.

Just as I was prepared to write, wicked men seized me, and thrust me into a felon's jail, on the charge of being—a sinner? No! but merciful, kind, compassionate to some of the poor of the land, contrary to the laws of Maryland. I have been tried, and *convicted*, on just such evidence as the Jews brought against my Saviour and yours; neither more respectable nor more true. It is very possible the next years of my life may be spent in prison, with no companion to whom to open my heart, but Christ. Blessed be His Holy Name. No prison can exclude him from the soul.

Meantime, I had a few days of reprieve. One anxiety only has been in my heart. I have a wife and children. They are poor; I in prison. How can I save them from want? By doing evil I will not; perhaps by doing good I may. Without books, with no helps, a few days' labor will not impart to the long meditated volume the character which shall entirely fit it for a Sabbath School Society. But, by imparting to it somewhat more of a narrative form, even its value may not be impaired, while its interest shall be increased. It may do good to many, by showing them the path of life, and it may help, too, to feed my family. If it is *worth reading*, it will do both.

So I have written. According to my best judgment it is fitted to do good, to attract attention to the saving truths of the gospel, and to lead men to love them. Otherwise I should not dare to send it to the press, even to gain an end so sacred as bread for the hungry. I have given it, so to

speak, a *local scenery*. I have drawn its scenes, its incidents, its illustrations, mostly from the Home of my childhood. It even takes, in part, the form of personal narrative. Other incidents were not wanting, derived from countless sources, to illustrate great principles. But I love to connect everything I write with the endearments, the sorrows, the joys of Home; the scenes and friends whom I loved in youth. And I have trusted that it would give a more familiar, *home-like* character to views intended to guide the steps of those who seek a Home on high. There is not an incident, not a narrative or an illustration but is true, in fact, so far as I know. Most of them are drawn from my own personal recollections, and are connected with the life and death of those I dearly loved.

The local and personal allusions, while I trust they will offend none, will I hope benefit some of my early and still loved associates. At the same time, to the general reader, they illustrate traits of human character and principles of action that are as universal as the elements of fallen or regenerate manhood.

The 'Plot' is simply the decline of spiritual religion in a Puritan church, and its revival. The causes of both are illustrated by incidents of every kind, so as to present the contrast between the worldly and spiritual mind as vividly as may be.

If one illustration provoke a smile, another may cause a tear. Smiles and tears make up our life. I love both, in their places. Sometimes they each spring from an heart of agony; sometimes each is the herald of joy.

I have not avoided brief discussions of topics both profound and exciting. And I never go out of my way to avoid a thought that is new, or possibly, offensive, so be, that I believe it *true*.

So, Reader, the writer and his book you know. May it help you to value and enjoy that *every-day religion* which fills the bosom of the prisoner with the Peace of God, and by which our feet may be safely guided in the path that leads from our earthly dwelling-place to our HEAVENLY HOME.

CHARLES T. TORREY.

Baltimore, Md. }  
Dec. 20, 1844. }

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# HOME!

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“They left unstained, what there they found,  
Freedom to worship God!”

*Felicia Hemans.*

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## CHAPTER I.

Our town described—Early settlers—Piety with knowledge—Educated Ministry—No village—No foreign source of corruption—The Pastor settled—Parish funds. Two causes of declension, (1) Theoretical errors, (2) Bad morality—No life remains.

“Home! home! sweet home!  
Be it ever so homely,  
There’s no place like home!”

“OUR TOWN,” the scene of my narrative, is one of the first thirteen incorporated towns of New England. I shall call it simply, HOME. Long years have passed since I ceased to be more than a chance visitor there; but there’s not a hill, nor a stream, nor a quiet meadow, or forest grove, not one of its dwellings—many of which bear the mosses of nearly two centuries on their venerable roofs, in which I do not feel that tender, and ap-

propriating interest which is ever linked with that sweet word, HOME. No lapse of time, no change of pursuits, no alienations of feeling or sentiment blot from my memory one scene of my childhood. In my dreams, in the *prison cell* of a distant city, I revisit every old haunt, think where I plucked the butter-cups and violets ; and the old moss grown nut tree, the button wood where the oriole hung her nest of fine thread, far beyond the reach of the most daring ; the dear old mansion where my early youth was passed so rapidly ; and, more than all, the playmates, whose every feature, every joyous laugh, every little sorrow, all seem as vividly before me, as if it were yesterday's scenes.

So, no matter what the maps call it, its name shall be HOME.

The first white settler in Home, was one of my own ancestors. His humble calling, a tanner, did not exempt him from the malice of those who "wore out the Saints of the Most High," in the Fatherland. So, gathering up his household goods, cheered by the smiles of his Christian partner, he crossed the waste of waters, and, with a courage few dared imitate, plunged into the wilderness above twenty miles from any habitation of a Christian man. His meek confidence in them, and the utility of his calling, gained him the favor of the

savages, and they gave him a large tract of cleared land, part of their own cornfields, as a token of their love and gratitude. His line of descendants still live on the hallowed spot where the *first prayer* ascended to our Father's God from the domestic altar. He came to the town in 1622. A few years more converted the wild woods and swamps into the fields and rich meadows of the pleasant farming and fishing town of Home.

The eastern border, for some twelve miles, rests on the sea-shore. It is a long, rocky beach, on which the surges never cease to beat, which has been the last sand touched by many a shipwrecked sailor, and is interrupted by several high hills, or cliffs. In some past century these cliffs were long promontories, jutting out into the ocean waves. Storm after storm has beat upon them, and now, more than two thirds of their soil has fallen, and been washed away. Twenty years ago, I remember riding on firm soil, at a safe distance from the then peaceful brink of one of the cliffs, more than an hundred feet beyond the present reach of the fierce waves. And the huge rocks that once dotted the top, now help to break the power of the waters, far out from the shore. These cliffs, in 1622 were covered with the cornfields of the Indians. At the foot of one of them stood their wig-

wams. Near by, stands the old mansion, or its successor, built on the soil they gave the friendly Christian tanner. Between another, and a rocky headland, is our little tide harbor, giving shelter to our fishing craft, and a few vessels engaged in the coasting trade.

For more than fifteen miles, our southern border rests on the winding banks of a little river, famed for its excellent fisheries, and still more for its ship-building. Here our carpenters launched the first American vessel that ever doubled the stormy Cape Horn, and coasted the western shores of our continent. It was manned, in part, tradition says, by our towns-people.

From the broad meadows of the river banks, the land rises gently towards the North and West, towards a range of hills that *we* call mountains, though the dwellers on the sides of the White Hills would smile at the designation. Mount Hope, the highest, may be 300 feet above the tide level. From these hills many little brooks and streamlets find their way to the river, and sea side. There is not an abrupt hill, not a precipice, save one on the sea shore, in all the town. The hills slope gently down to the streams; and these flow with hardly a murmur, through the woods and wilds till they are lost in the large river, having just descent enough

to supply mill sites to saw the boards, and grind the corn and rye we use. The whole tone of the scenery is quiet, peaceful, *loving*, if I may so apply the word. The soil is everywhere good, yielding fair returns to the farmer's toil.

HOME was early settled by a large number of energetic men, who, without exception, engaged in farming. Even the ministers, till within my own recollection, cultivated the parsonage lands, set apart for the support of the gospel by the piety of the early settlers. The physicians followed the same example. So did the merchants. And as for a lawyer, to this day, with over 4000 people, we have neither crimes nor quarrels enough to support one! They, too, have been farmers, although several of them have adorned the highest judicial stations in the Commonwealth and the Nation.

Till within ten years, there was nothing like a village in Home. The people are so evenly distributed over its wide surface, that each lives on his own separate farm, yet not a house in all Home is out of sight of its neighbor. I remember one house, in my boyhood, that was so surrounded with noble pine forests, that, in spite of its situation on a hill top, no other house was visible from it. It was a topic of general congratulation, among the neighbors, when the fall of several huge trees, that

had braved the storms of centuries, gave that lonely family a view of a chimney-top, perhaps a hundred rods away! "Yes, we feel much more social, now," remarked the kind woman, who for thirty years had not been able to see her neighbors without going to their houses, or receiving their visits.

There are, there always have been, some rich, very rich men in our town. But the social inequalities that riches and poverty too often create were scarcely ever known. I remember one rich man who made himself very generally odious, because he would have his hired laborers eat in the kitchen, instead of seating them at the family table. "He was so proud, he would die poor," was once said of him. He did not, but his children may.

For a century and a half, hardly a foreigner has entered Home. The few who came were soon assimilated to the habits and feelings of a people born, living, and dying on the same soil. I can remember twenty families in one section of the town, which, for seven, eight and nine generations have lived on the same spot; no rare thing in the old countries, but quite so in our new and ever moving land. No foreign sources of corruption, therefore, ever came in to make the sons unworthy to bear the names of their sires. If they have fallen, the root of evil is from within.

The first settlers were generally men of property. Many of them were scholars and accomplished gentlemen. They impressed on their children a love of learning, and a refinement of manners that has never wholly disappeared, in the darkest periods of the annals of Home.

Sound in their religious faith, taught the value of a good hope towards God by the lessons of persecution, there was not, perhaps, for two generations a head of a family who did not belong to the church; not a house in which the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving was omitted.

No law was ever needed to induce the people to sustain a sufficient number of excellent free schools. And, for more than a century from the settlement, a public "grammar" school, supplied to all who desired it, the means of a more enlarged course of study. While the rigor of the early faith and piety remained, no town set a greater value on the higher branches of education than the people of Home.

At an early period two large churches were gathered, and pastors were settled; men who combined the most fervent piety with the best education the Universities of the mother country, or our own infant Harvard could afford. An ignorant



clergyman was never suffered to disgrace a pulpit, in Home. Oh, had the people always cared as much for the deeper dishonor done to it, by the want of a pure faith and the graces of the Spirit, how different would have been the results! Piety without knowledge soon becomes mere weak fanaticism. But knowledge without piety only "puffeth up" the natural heart with pride, and leads the spirit far away from God.

Nothing better illustrates the spirit of our fathers, than the mode of providing a pastor, as it is spread out on many a page of the early town records of Home. The whole town took part in it; for not a family was found in its limits who lived without, at least, the forms of religion. It was a municipal act, as well as an act of the members of the church, in their ecclesiastical capacity. This was, indeed, an error of our fathers, which later experience has corrected. But with them, the hearts of all so united in the work, that it made little difference in the first century.

The first step was to assemble all the church, and appoint a day of public fasting and prayer, that God would guide them in the selection of a candidate for the pastoral office. From sunset till sunset again, the entire people *fasted*, literally. In every house, the reading of the Scriptures and prayer oc-



cupied the intervals of public worship. Commonly some neighboring pastor preached to them two sermons, appropriate to their condition, and to the solemn duties connected with their objects. 'Those long, *long* sermons! Each from two to four hours long! How did our fathers and mothers endure it, even in summer weather, not to speak of the cold, icy winter's day, when the sun had no power to melt the icicle on the sheltered south eaves, and neither stove nor fireplace shed a genial glow over any part of their vast wooden edifices for worship. Their faith warmed them, or else they were made of sterner stuff than their children.

Then followed the appointment of a committee of the wisest men of the church to take the advice of the neighboring churches and pastors respecting a candidate, unless, indeed, one of eminent gifts was at hand, respecting whom no such advice could be needed.

The candidate came. For six months or a year he "went in and out before the people," preached the word, visited the sick, comforted the afflicted, taught the young, counselled the aged. In a word, he discharged, as he was able, all the offices of a pastor. Even all this did not decide his settlement, in every case. Another day of prayer and fasting was observed, "to know the

mind of the Spirit whether He would call" the candidate to the permanent discharge of these duties. If any doubt remained, the matter was still deferred, and other days of prayer set apart. Then, if the people were united, the advice of the surrounding churches and pastors was sought ; not, indeed, as having any binding control over their choice, but as a matter of brotherly affection and courtesy. Then followed the solemn services of the ordination. No wonder that the pastoral relation so maturely formed, was an enduring bond, that nothing but death, or the misconduct of the pastor could sever. Care was needed, in forming ties, so sacred in their objects, with which the spiritual welfare of an entire generation was to be bound up.

Before the final decision, the people, in their municipal capacity, assembled to provide, in a suitable manner, for the support of their pastor, so that no grinding necessity might compel him to neglect his study for the labors of the field ; though it was not deemed improper for him to sow and reap his own glebe, as well as scatter the seeds of spiritual life, and gather in the harvest of immortality.

At these meetings, as well as on the ordinary Sabbath services, every person, of every age, not in actual attendance on the sick, was expected to be present. Causeless absence was noted, the offend-

er visited and tenderly reproved. And, if admonition did not avail, he was *fined*, as an offender against the rules of good morals, as well as the laws of God's house. *We* deem this unwise; but our fathers, erroneous as they were in some things, judged rightly of the value of social worship, both to the morals and spiritual well-being of man.

The pious, in every generation, have their modes of imparting religious instruction to the young. Our fathers knew its vital import, as well as we. In every family that feared God, family instruction was given on the sabbath, and from day to day, "rising up early and teaching them" to walk in the path of life. The pastor, too, every month, assembled the youth, not merely to hear the catechism, but to give such lessons on its great truths as were adapted to their age.

I do not wonder that errorists ridicule that old catechism! Its quaint terms, half obsolete, save in books of technical theology, cannot obscure the brightness and logical harmony of the great truths it contains. And it is a foolish undervaluing of the intellectual powers of our children, to suppose that most of them cannot understand these primary doctrines of the Bible, stated in logical form, as well as when clothed in the attractions of parable, or story. Error can never gain control

over the conscience, when the mind is imbued with clear, logical conceptions of these divine truths.

In both the parishes of Home, the erring piety of our fathers made ample provision, by large vested funds, for the permanent support of the ministry. I say 'erring;' for it is far better to leave to every generation the duty, and blessing too, of feeding their spiritual guides, by their own free-will offerings. They love their pastor more, because they impart to him their "carnal things," in return for the spiritual joy, peace and comfort they derive from his labors. The widest observation proves that the pastor's dependence does not diminish his fidelity. It is the reverse, with all who are fitted, either by nature or grace to preach the gospel at all. And those who best "commend themselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God," by a plain and loving exhibition of the guilt of man, and the glory of the cross will always, or almost always, find the most liberal support.

For more than a century the hopes and prayers of the fathers of Home were justified by the general piety, pure morality, and high intelligence of their descendants.

One instance of their superiority over the general prejudices of their age, I am too proud of to omit.

The witchcraft delusion, after destroying thou-

sands of lives in every part of Protestant and Catholic Europe, began to infect the land of the Pilgrims also. For a brief period, the popular delusion was strong. The wisest magistrates, the profoundest scholars, the most devout ministers were carried away with it. In a few instances even death was inflicted upon victims, not more deluded than those who adjudged their doom. But, even when the frenzy was at its height there were not wanting wise and good men who pitied the weakness they could not help censuring; and who deemed a merciful forbearance a better remedy for popular delusion than the hangman's scourge and rope. The people of Home from the very first, resisted the mania. Their enlightened members of the Governor's council, and of the Legislature, with the hearty concurrence of both pastors and people, strove to rescue the supposed witches from their fate, and to repeal the sanguinary edicts against them. It is a matter of history that their efforts were ultimately crowned with success. Intelligence so much in advance of their age, firmness in resisting a force to which a Hale and a Mather yielded, deserve high praise. I am proud of my early HOME.

The causes that dimmed the lustre of the most

fine gold, in their details, I reserve for another chapter. Some general thoughts will close this.

There are two generic modes in which a religious community become corrupted. Their morality may be debased, while their attachment to correct theoretical truths is not, at first, abated. Or, their faith in sound doctrines may be shaken, without affecting the tone of social morals, often for a long period.

Both these modes of corruption destroy spiritual life in the soul, equally. "Faith without works is dead, living alone," no matter how strong it may be, or with how vivid feelings it may be connected. And the most correct outward life will not obtain the pardon of our sin; for "*the just shall live by faith.*"

The evil of a dead faith, besides separating the soul from God, will certainly, in the end, destroy good morals. Dead faith *has fruits*; but they are bitter as the apples of Sodom.

The evil of impure living will, in the end, destroy correct faith; for sinners, determined to live in sin, "will not bear sound doctrine," but "heap to themselves teachers," who will connive at their sins, and persuade them they are in the road to heaven, while the pit is wide open to devour them alive.

Such are the restraints thrown around the ministry, that corruption in morals seldom begins with them. But the world has but one example,—that of Swedenborg—of errors in the theory of the faith which do not spring from the teachers of religion. Examples of both modes of corruption are common enough in all ages and in every land. Our own supplies many. When men begin to regard religion as something intended for the Sabbath, the sick bed, or old age, instead of the guide of their daily life in all its actions, civil, as well as individual and social, it is easy to see that their faith is dying; it will soon be dead. They may still have deep and pervading religious excitements, and call them “revivals.” There may be a keen sense of sin, humiliation; followed by peace, joy, rapture! The human soul is naturally devout. The worshipper of Brahma and Guadama may have as sincere and profound emotion as the follower of Christ. Is his heart purified? His life gives the answer. The Spanish pirate had his priests. With profound humility, with many tears, with deep remorse, with penance and scourges he bought absolution; then filled with hope, he returned to his work of butchery. The slaveholder of our land, often professes a correct creed, has clear views of the divine character,



sees the evil of sin, in general, humbles himself, finds peace, and deems himself forgiven. Then he turns to make the poor work without wages, sells the righteous in the market, "a boy, for a harlot, a girl, for a pair of shoes;" and tears asunder the ties of nature and love. Still he thinks he is a child of God. The debased morals of churches that allow slavery has been very widely followed by doctrinal errors, far more widely than northern men are aware. Popular preaching, in these churches, more and more fails to exhibit the humbling doctrines of the cross, and becomes merely eloquent appeals to the natural feelings and sympathies, or acquired tastes of the audience. Among the more ignorant classes, dreams and delusions more gross than witchcraft, and animal—or if you will—magnetic excitements, as baleful as they are foolish, take the place of a correct faith and pure life.

Instances of the other form of corruption are found, among us, in small sects, and in individuals. My narrative will supply many. Though, in a community like New England, where the public law is one, for the rich and the poor; where no man's vices are screened by his dependence or his power; where in every town *some* correct religious faith and practice sheds light on the lingering darkness, even *gross* religious errors *cannot*



debase the morals of social life, so soon, or so widely, as happens in the other class of cases.

Besides, as this form of corruption begins always with the ministers, those who preach a lax faith, in doctrines, are often the more eager to enforce a correct outward deportment and amiable manner. They have lost the highest sources of power to enforce a pure life; but they may be diligent in using the influences that remain. As they declare heaven depends on correct morals and amiable social conduct, they often succeed in forming such characters as that of the young ruler, who lacked but "one thing," the *spirit* of self-denying love that should have given harmony to the inner and outward man.

This class of teachers are eager to show that without the cross, without an atoning Saviour, and a sanctifying Spirit, they can make men as lovely in their social life, as pure in morals, as free from acts of dishonor or dishonesty, as those who combine evangelical faith with the same teachings of morality. In a town where purifying agencies of greater power once acted, or still exist, with some power, they succeed in many instances.

"When Jesus looked upon him, he *loved*" the young ruler. As he looks down from his throne in glory, where he still wears man's loving nature

and human sympathies, no doubt he loves, in the same degree, the amiable fruits of the labors of these teachers. "But ONE THING thou lackest." The life of faith they do not live. The heart of love for divine purity, justice and goodness they do not possess. They will "go away sorrowful" from the gates of glory, which they thought would so certainly open to receive them.

So then, the emotion, the enthusiasm of faith may exist, in connection with a corrupt morality.

And amiable manners and correct morals may remain after correct ideas of the gospel of salvation are lost.

The one is "faith without works." Can faith save him? The other is "works without faith." Is a man justified by works only? Neither is an example of *true religion*. In that, "*faith works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.*"

The spirit of life within throws around the outward life the glory, the sweetness, the peace and beauty of its own nature.

## CHAPTER II.

The gold dimmed—Causes—(1) Civil rights conferred on church members only—(2) Half-way covenant—True view of the sacraments—(3) Worldly churches will have worldly ministers—Whitefield rejected—Teachers of error—(4) Influence of the Revolution—The way the tories paid taxes—War no friend of Christ.

ONE hundred years rolled away, without one of those blessed seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which has taken the name of a “revival.” The light of holy living and pure faith went out, and death reigned where the power and living beauty of the faith had been so nobly manifested, in the earlier periods of the annals of Home. The fathers slept, and their sons built their sepulchres, but failed to inherit their mantles of piety.

The causes of this sad change were many. Some of them of a general and public nature ; others local, though not without many examples elsewhere.

The earliest source of corruption, in which the churches of Home shared, in common with many others, was one of the errors of our fathers. They wished to base their civil polity entirely on the

maxims and principles of religion. The wish was laudable ; the means of attaining it, an educated, pious ministry, free, self-governed churches, faithful instruction of their household, a sanctified Sabbath, universal *free* education, were most wisely adapted to the end. To these, other measures of a more doubtful character were added. The most injurious was the law by which civil rights were confined to members of the churches. This was full of evil, in every way. It was a powerful motive to a mere formal and hypocritical profession of a faith in which the heart had no share. As every mind was imbued with the theory of a correct faith, and more or less familiar with the outlines of religious experience, both by reading and from often listening to its details ; such a hollow profession was not very difficult, when the outward life of the candidate did not compel the church to exclude him. Indeed such was the real respect for religion, in the popular mind, that such professions did not always involve conscious hypocrisy. The worldly motive gave unconscious power to the effects of religious education. So have I seen the carefully trained children of Christian families admitted to the churches, without any want of sincerity or emotion, on either part, but with faint evidence indeed that the love of God had been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit.

So, when men of correct lives, wealth, talent and energy, punctual in their attention to the forms of religion, sought admission to the church, as a means of obtaining civil rights, it became a very difficult matter to exclude them.

Slowly, but certainly, the churches were filled with worldly men ; amiable in their life, but without living faith in the cross.

It is true, the civil law referred to was repealed at an early day. But the influence of it long remained. It was necessary to a man's good repute, and it smoothed the path to influence and honor to belong to the church, long after the law ceased to require it. No churches suffered more from this cause than the rich and intelligent churches of Home. With a single exception, in an adjacent town, they were the first in the land to show the evil fruits of it.

At a somewhat later period they drank deeply of the evils that flowed from what is known as the " half-way-covenant," by which, without any personal profession of their faith, parents were allowed to present their children for baptism, and covenant, before God and man, to train them up in the precepts of a faith whose power they neither acknowledged nor felt, in their own souls. This was, it is true, only the resumption of one of the

long continued and early corruptions of the church, against which the Puritan fathers had protested. Their clear, anointed eyes saw the folly and sin of the baptism of merely nominal Christians and their children, as the persecuting church from which they fled then practised, and still did. It was only a mockery of faith for parents to take God's name and covenant on their lips, when His love did not fill their hearts.

True, the eloquence and zeal of a Stoddard revived the custom, with reference mainly to another idea ; but that was one of the most noxious of the errors of the Papal church. It was, that the sacraments and offices of religion had in themselves a sanctifying power ; or, at least, impenitent men were to use them to obtain it ; a principle which has no legitimate application to anything but the hearing of the word and prayer ; and to the last, in a restricted sense, only. Indeed, there is very little *natural* relation between the symbols of Christianity, and the idea we connect with them, in the sacraments. Anything else might represent the body, or love of the dying Saviour, as well as bread. It is chosen because it is the commonest article, in daily use, that we may never eat without "discerning the Lord's body," if our hearts are filled with His love. The fruit

of the vine has no possible analogy to those spiritual changes in the affections of the soul which faith in the atoning blood, or offered free pardon of Christ effects. Nor has the water of baptism, applied to the cleansing of the body any but a remote analogy to the changes the Holy Spirit produces in the heart, when love, joy and peace take the place of selfishness, sorrow and remorse. It is only as the clear intellect and pure heart dwell on the ideas and truths associated with these outward symbols, that they have any more influence in sanctifying our nature than the occupation of killing and dressing sheep, bullocks and goats, in which the priesthood under the old law were so much employed. All these sacrifices and forms are a system of Mnemonics, designed to connect holy and sanctifying truths with familiar acts, such as the preparation and use of articles of food and drink, and the purifying of the body, by daily ablutions. The spiritual heart never eats bread or drinks water, but the self-denying love that bled on the cross, and the grace that proffers free pardon and renovated affections is more or less present to the mind. The sacraments are only more formal, and highly necessary and useful mementoes of the same truths. So Christ seeks to connect himself with our familiar acts, that "every thought may

be brought into captivity to the *obedience* of Christ," or regulated by the same holy love that governed his acts of suffering and grace.

The crowd of these baptized semi-church members, whose outward life was free from any serious reproach, and who constantly attended on the forms of worship, yet never or seldom were taught the value of piety and prayer by parental example, soon became very great. Their admission to the other sacraments, and all the rights of membership, it was very difficult to resist. The number of worldly members in the churches became very great. From this class not a few were taken to supply the want of religious teachers. Serious, perhaps devout, such men, without heartfelt piety, could not be expected to preach with fidelity the doctrines of the cross by which the pride of man is abased, and all his glory counted as dross. They did not. A large class of worldly ministers soon filled the pulpits. Learned, often eminent for their talents and eloquence, they won the popular favor, and became, in many instances, the advocates of religious doctrines that accorded better with the state of their own hearts, unrenewed by divine grace, than with the teachings of the Bible.

It is only a matter of *justice* to acknowledge the aid and influence of our Baptist brethren, in



banishing a second time, from the Puritan churches this child of English Episcopacy and Popery. Every sect exercises an influence in correcting the errors of others ; while important truths are only cherished with a heartier zeal.

That the writings of Belsham, Priestly and others had some influence on a few of the educated men of Home is beyond doubt. Still, on minds not previously prepared for them, by the causes adverted to, and other agencies of like character, they had little power. No reasonings ever led a truly converted man to deny the doctrines of depravity and regeneration. No arguments against the Deity and atonement of our Saviour ever shook the faith of one who enjoyed daily communion with him. But the reasoning intellect not irradiated by the love of the Spirit, is more easily led astray.

The more local causes of declension at Home are not without general interest. For the causes that affect the spiritual life of communities are much the same, everywhere.

Almost one hundred years ago, after the death of a venerable and faithful pastor, under whose ministry the last " revival " had occurred, a young man, eminent for his learning, his winning manners, his fervid eloquence, but without the love of God in his heart, became a candidate for settlement.

Won by his attractive qualities, more than usual haste was made to engage him to become the pastor of one of the churches. Amiable and correct in his deportment, this young man had imbibed views approaching as nearly to Deism as those of any of his successors in our time. There was no dissent from doctrines contained in the creed of the church, and cherished in the hearts of the pious. He avoided the discussion of them, or else, endeavored, as he said, to divest them of the needless philosophy of other days in which they were clothed. Whether, like some in our day, he had discovered errors in the ethical views of the apostles, I know not. But his preaching was not such as the fathers loved. The worldly part of the church were pleased with one who did not disturb them with new demands on their affections, in God's behalf. It was known that he was not a "high-toned Calvinist," as spiritual men already began to be called. But few suspected that he did not believe in the modified faith of the "moderates" of the time. His brief ministry, brief for those days, ten years, was closed by his death. But the poison distilled so sweetly from his lips had spread widely, and prepared the way for his successor.

Nearly contemporary with him, in the other church, presided one of the fairest intellects that

adorned the annals of New England, afterwards the head of our leading University. Predominant in genius, varied and profound learning, eloquence that charmed the wisest into, at least a momentary forgetfulness of his errors, this eminent man united a deep rooted hostility to spiritual religion, with those doctrinal errors by which, alone, he is now widely known to mankind. He was the first author in our land who sought to shake the faith of men in the justice of the retributions of eternity. Every scholar has read his treatise, and the reply to it by the Master Spirit of that age, and yet the humble preacher of a spiritual faith.

The great errorist did not so openly assail the other doctrines of the Bible. He hinted doubts whether the depravity of the heart was entire; whether man's dependence on divine grace was complete; urged more strongly man's freedom of action; and dwelt chiefly, in his preaching, on the effects of religion on the social charities of life.

His eloquence in the pulpit, and the influence of his writings did very much to shake the faith of the younger part of the people in Home, and all the surrounding country. Two such eloquent and popular men, both without Christ in their hearts, both avoiding every doctrine obnoxious to human pride; both learned, commanding the respect of all their

generation, might have made shipwreck of the faith of the people, almost, had no other agencies been at work for that end. If they could not move the matured disciple from his steadfastness, they might, and did prepare a new race, to stand in the room of their pious fathers, without the same zeal for pure principles and holy living. What lessons are these of the need of looking first for holiness, next for soundness in the faith of those to whom we entrust the care of souls ! I speak of both of these men as without spirituality. An unconverted minister, in that age, was not very rare, as the records of the times too certainly prove. The churches, grown worldly, sought and found pastors after their own hearts, and those who avoided the "offence of the cross" voted themselves the, "enlightened," the "liberal party" of their day. Endowed with intellectual resources, many of them were above their fellows. But their wisdom was that of "this world," which is "foolishness with God."

One fact deserves mention, both as an instance and a proof of the feelings of the great man. No one now doubts—whatever may be his creed—that Wesley and Whitefield were "chosen vessels" of mercy to revive spiritual life in the Protestant world. The one founded a community, tireless in their beneficent labors for the good of man. The other,

though he gave his name to no sect, exerted perhaps a wider influence, by his preaching in reviving the life of religion in all sects. His sermons were not very logical or didactic. But with an eloquence never surpassed, and a pathos that moved the heart, "day and night, with tears" he preached the simple and majestic doctrines of redemption. The worldly ministers and churches resisted his labors. But to all who received him, God made him the source of the richest spiritual gifts. The pastors of Home not only refused to receive Whitefield, or bid him God speed ! but took the lead in the remonstrances of the worldly lovers of ease against his labors.

Such a "comet" was not to be suffered. Such "excitements crazed men," instead of imbuing their minds with "rational views of religion." The people followed the example of their pastors, and the pall of spiritual death gathered more darkly over them.

The creeds of the churches were still adhered to in form ; and sounder models of a saving faith are seldom to be found ; but it is doubtful whether at this period, one half the people believed them.

I shall not confine myself to precise dates or the order of events. The war of the Revolution followed, preceded by years of bloody struggle

with the French and Indians, in which many a soldier from Home gallantly discharged a soldier's duty.

War is the scourge of God, with which he chastises guilty nations. When waged for the noblest objects, to obtain or preserve civil, personal or religious liberty, it is still a fearful curse. It substitutes the *law of force* for the rules of right and justice. It sanctions every disregard of the rights of mankind, given them by God their Creator, in order to inflict the greatest possible evils on those whom we are bound to love as our brethren, and to benefit as the sons of one father. Property, purity, honor, life, all fall a sacrifice to its power. And no man can inflict such evils upon another without diminishing in his own heart, the sense of the sacred nature of the obligation to respect all these, in all men. God never made one man or nation to be the enemy of another. Wars and fightings are the product of "lusts," wicked passions alone. The "religious" wars that followed the Reformation almost destroyed the immediate spiritual benefits of that great awakening of the human soul to light and pardon. Our own Revolution, though exempt from some of the evils that have followed in the train of war, brought curses as well as blessings with it. I speak not

of the sacking and burning of towns, the plundering of the hamlet and farm, the waste of life and vast loss of property in other forms. All these are evils that pass away in half a generation, and are forgotten. But the moral results of that contest were not all such as the patriot and the Christian could desire.

The French soldiery brought with them the coarse, brutal, but witty infidelity then rife in their native land. Multitudes of our youth, and even eminent statesmen were carried away captive by the ridicule of Voltaire, the eloquence of Rousseau, and the sophisms of Bayle, Diderot, D'Alembert and their co-laborers in the bold attempt to "crush the wretch," as the shallow wit of Fermay dared to call that Glorious One "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead, bodily."

Despite the efforts of Washington to repress both, profane swearing and intemperance became common in the army, among both officers and soldiers. It is said that a profane oath was never known in Home, before the war. The vice became frequent, on the return of the soldiers. Home was a patriotic town. She supplied more soldiers to the army than any town in the country, in proportion to the population. The bones of her sons repose in every battle-field, from Bunker



Hill to Yorktown. But of those who survived, alas, many returned to scourge their families by intemperance, and defile the ears of their children by their curses. The young are eager imitators. Their nature is seen in the readiness with which they run, not walk, in the road that leads to death. The generation that followed learned a full measure of these pernicious ways.

As the bitterness of that contest has long since passed away, and the descendants of whig and tory alike enjoy and rejoice in the blessings of equal liberty, we can afford to do justice to those who were then spoken of as "enemies of their country," I mean the tories. It is beyond question true, that many of the wisest, purest, most pious, liberty-loving men of that age opposed the war, from its beginning to its close. Some few really preferred a monarchy. Among the patriot statesmen, after the war, even, such a party existed ! Many more were averse to severing the ties that bound them to the mother country, at least, till oppression took forms less capable of endurance. Some did not see why subjects who claimed the rights secured by the Common Law of England, should not be governed by the authority of the king and parliament who were the public ministers of that law. Others were men of peace, hating and dreading



civil strife; but, when it was over, quite ready to enjoy its results.

The tories had one of two courses before them, when Independence was once declared. They must abandon their homes, and all their property they could not carry with them, and enlist in the British army, or flee to foreign lands; or else, they must remain in quiet, waiting for the event, and submitting to all the exactions of their more patriotic brethren. And it is capable of ample proof, that the whigs made their tory neighbors pay far *more* than their share of all the expenses of a war opposed both to their principles and wishes.

Nearly an hundred of the most substantial farmers of Home were tories in feeling. The town records show that, at one time, as many as sixty were placed under the special surveillance of the Committee of Safety; the helpless lamb in the lion's mouth was not more sure of being made a victim! It is amusing to read over the doings of our patriotic sires! Large requisitions often came from Head Quarters for supplies for the troops. Was clothing wanting for the naked soldiers at Valley Forge? The Committee of Safety discovered that their tory brethren had sheared more sheep, and woven more cloth, by far, than the whigs. Were provisions needed? Every one knew that the tories'

crops were better than those of their neighbors' ! *They* had nothing else to do, but to till the ground ! Was money wanted to pay the valiant defenders of their country ? The whigs were ready to sacrifice life, but they, the tories, had such hordes of English gold ! So in all cases, the requisition was met, in chief, by levying contributions on the defenceless tories. "It was but just that the enemies of the liberties of the people should be made to pay for their want of patriotism." Much as our whig fathers and mothers sacrificed on the altar of their country, no one, who has looked into the local annals of that time can doubt that the resident tories were taxed far more for the expenses of the war. They would not peril limb or life ; but in every other form they *must* serve their country ! Happily, the grandson of a member of the Committee of Safety—the tax levying power of that day—can sit with the grandchild of the then tory, and smile at the deeds of '76, and rejoice in the freedom secured both by the perils and trials of the time. But the disregard of the common laws and rights of property, and the feelings of good neighborhood and social life was not without effect in hastening the decay of piety, where its fires already burned so dim. Alienations, jealousies, revenge, remembered scorn and party bitter-

ness, the inevitable fruits of civil strife, are not found in the catalogue of the graces of the Spirit. The public mind was so entirely absorbed in the great conflict, that even the forms of Sabbath worship were often forgotten, and family prayer omitted in many a dwelling, whose heads were fighting their country's battles, or maddened by whig taxes to support a cause they hated.

Down to the beginning of that war, hardly a family or an individual was ever needlessly absent from public worship. In almost every house, certainly in all those of church-members, social worship and the instruction of the young were not neglected. "Oh yes, I *larn't* all that, in my young days," was the remark of an aged, and profane woman to me, when I reproved her for her sins. "We all *larn't* the catechise, in them days, and said it to our minister; but I never was much the better for it." It was too true. Her father after fighting his country's battles, died a drunkard. I would not have the reader think that such inelegant phrases are common in Home. They are very rare. But I often think of that old woman—one who was very kind to me in childhood,—as one of the sorrowful results of the want of an example of the power of religion in the parents, before the eyes of the young—one of the kindest

hearts God ever made in a woman's breast was embittered against the truth by a drunken father's influence. Of all the scores of our patriot soldiers, I can recall but four or five who died with the Christian's hope. Oh how many went down to the dark, dishonored grave of the drunkard ! And few of the first generation of their descendants showed any more proofs of spiritual life. From the grosser evils of war Home was happily exempt ; but its moral desolations were deeply felt, and there was less of the power of religion, than in many places, to resist them. Too grateful to our fathers, we cannot be, for the legacy of freedom they left us. But that should not close our eyes to the evils of warfare, even to obtain blessings so great. Let us learn the lesson—so debasing to the glory of fallen man, that a warlike people will certainly become depraved in morals. The highest glories are those of peace. When the world's history is reviewed at the Judgment, and re-written in the future life, the man of peace will take the place of the soldier as the only real benefactor of his kind. Hasten, O Lord, that day, when,

“No war, nor battle's sound,  
Is heard the earth around,”

but Christ, the Prince of Peace shall reign over a world of holy hearts !

## CHAPTER III.

Like people, like priest—The worldly pastor described—  
The deist in the pulpit—Church discipline neglected—  
Religious ideas lost—The heart wiser than the intellect  
—The deacon's faith—Pure faith connected with prosperity—The ball.

A WORLDLY flock will not have a spiritual shepherd. Those who love sin do not love to be reformed for it, nor will they, commonly, bear it, unless the reproofs of the faithful pastor are enforced by examples of holy living, and his hands are stayed up by fervent prayer.

Not far from the close of the French war, a pastor was settled in one of our churches, who was eminent for almost everything but fidelity to a pastor's proper duties. A patriot he was ; none loved his country better ; none more ready to serve her and exhort others to do so, in the hour of her peril. A statesman was he ; none were more capable of sound judgment respecting the measures of government ; few more decided in the expression of their views. A gentleman, in manners ; dignified, courteous, refined, at least in

his earlier life; amiable in his manners and feelings. A scholar; few wore the honors of their Alma Mater with a better grace; he deserved them. A wit; the country round, to the end of time, will remember his dry jests, his proverbial sayings, often full of point and practical wisdom. A farmer; his sermons on agriculture, on soils, on the culture of fruit, on bees, on cattle and sheep, on every interest of the husbandman, would do honor to the orator of a Cattle Fair. They were of much service to the labor of the town. He ever inculcated industry as the highest of social virtues. It does save multitudes from sin who would perish in it, if they lived an idle life.

He was social in his habits; a good companion to the young and old was the pastor; none more so. Every one welcomed him, for they expected instruction or amusement, but—fatal defect!—*not* a reproof for their sinful life, or a warning to repent. He had a fund of common sense; no better counsellor could be found in the affairs of life, none was resorted to with so much confidence. He was respected and loved, but *not* for his fidelity to the souls of his people.

That he believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, his papers show. But he held it to be too mysterious to preach upon it. Selfish he knew men to

be ; some of his keenest maxims are *hits* at man's natural tendency to sin. But no faithful picture of our fallen nature, no warning to "flee from the wrath to come," fell from his lips. He used to say that his "young people were very good ; he should not *trouble* them with the doctrine of a new birth ; he would be bound for them." The atoning Saviour he did not know, the cross he did not preach. True, he never derided the great Hope of the guilty ; but he allowed a whole generation to live without that Hope.

He was an acute judge and delineator of character. His funeral prayers contained a minute sketch of the deceased person's life, and a shrewd, often very humorous delineation of his virtues and foibles, and even of his manners and personal peculiarities. Crowds attended his funeral services to hear this *treat* ; a scene sometimes painful to those who were not his friends. It was commonly said that he "prayed all his people into heaven," though it was sometimes dryly added, "he had very hard work with such an one!" There was no reverence, no humility in his prayers ; and people forgot the solemnity of an approach to the throne of God.

The catechetical instruction of the young he laid aside, on the plea that it was not suited for



their tender minds. Nor did he ever substitute any other form of imparting the truths of the gospel to them. The young treasured up his proverbs, but these had little to do with Christ or the way of life. At his death, there was not one young person, of either sex, belonging to his church ! The use of the creed was finally laid aside, in the admission of members. Persons of good moral life, were never objected to as members, because they had not been born of the Spirit. All inquiries into the state of their heart ceased. It was customary, in the respectable circles, to unite with the church on the occasion of marriage, the birth of children, or in seasons of affliction. It was respectable to do so. Still, the members of the church constantly lessened, till few remained who had not reached middle life. Gradually it ceased to be expected that members of the church would maintain family worship, on week days, or at all. At a more recent period I can well remember when only two of that church ever prayed in public, or in their families. But one church officer did so.

The pastor visited his people ; the wealthy, educated, and refined, often ; but nearly all once a year. But the objects of pastoral visits, the instruction of the family, and the acquaintance



with the spiritual wants of the individual members of it, personal exhortation to holy living, and even prayer were forgotten. As he advanced in life, many ceased to be visited at all. In his, and his successor's time, some families could say, "no minister has entered our house for thirty years, save at a wedding or a funeral.

As pastoral visits ceased or lost their appropriate character, the people began very extensively to neglect public worship, save at intervals, that grew more and more rare. When the pastor ceased to teach the young, parents soon followed the evil example. Family worship and family instruction became almost equally rare. The poor, and the distant members of the flock, not attracted by the preaching of the cross, or warned by a faithful pastor, ceased to frequent the house of God.

In the other church, the like causes had produced, to some extent, the same results, though a spiritual pastor had succeeded the great teacher of error, and his labors had fanned awhile the decaying spark of holiness.

Thus lived and died a whole generation who "knew not the Lord," with few exceptions. There was very little positive error prevalent, at the close of this period ; none in an active or organized form, to deceive the simple. There was

not enough of spiritual truth exhibited to alarm the corrupt heart, and lead it to seek any theoretical "refuge of lies" to sooth the awakened conscience. The pastors to whom I listened in my childhood were little calculated to restore the lost soul of religion, the spirit of love. They are both in their graves, in their eternity. I loved them both, I loved their children. I would speak of them with tenderness. But were they God's ministers? One of them was a man amiable in his social character, gentle in his manners, a lover of children. Respectable as a preacher, he rather alluded to, than uttered the truths of religion, which yet he did not really mean to deny. Probably, till near the close of life, he lived without piety in his own soul. Still, those who preferred preaching more directly addressed to the conscience, and that which approached nearer to the good old gospel of salvation, preferred him to his co-laborer. There was not enough of vital power to rekindle the flame of pure religion; not enough of error or obvious want of truth to destroy the piety that other causes had induced. Of the other, it was once said, that his head was a huge lumber garret, full of every kind of learning, which he lacked the skill to use. A poet by nature, his sermons were often beautiful; solemn they never were.

Elegant in person, and, when he chose, in manners also, his pride made him unsocial with the poor and obscure of the flock. Visits, save to a few favorites among the wealthy, he never made. Few believed that he prayed in secret. His public prayers were well described by a rude but clear headed laborious man, as “very handsome compliments to the Almighty.” I have listened to the prayers of men of every sect. It is often said that men will *pray* the truths they deny in their preaching. Not so with him. I never knew another man in whose prayers there was so little recognition of sin, our dependence, need of mercy, a Saviour, or a possible future retribution. With him, the Saviour was a man, simply ; a good one, though not free from imperfections in judgment or opinion. The writings of the apostles were imperfect records of a gospel, which we were to believe or reject, as their statement accorded with our own reason and advanced state of knowledge. No sacrifice for sin was needed. The goodness of God would overlook our imperfections, the result of weakness, more than intention. The heart was not depraved, but pure by nature, as an angel’s ; and needed only an appropriate education to fit it to mingle with them, *if*, indeed, there were angels. To be “born

again," was to renounce heathenism, or Judaism. It applied to none in Christian lands, save those of openly immoral life. If there was any hell, there was no devil! It was often said that our minister "had preached the devil out of town," though few exactly believed it! Eternal punishment was derided, the atonement scoffed at, pretences to spiritual life scorned, evangelical faith habitually treated as a pitiable weakness, or fond superstition. Such were the lessons of more than a quarter of a century. To such lessons I listened in my childhood. The doctrines he derided were never clearly stated; so that the people, having no other source of knowledge, were prejudiced against truths, the nature and import of which few of them knew. It is no strange thing that the churches became quite small.

In all this period, church discipline was utterly neglected. I can recall openly profane, drunken, lascivious persons, and those not obscure in life, who were quietly tolerated in the church. Indeed, I remember hearing a sermon in which the right to define the terms of membership was ridiculed. The practice and theory accorded well. The history of the church is everywhere full of warning to fidelity in discipline. Who would respect a church, when its richest member was openly al-

leged, without denial, to be an immoral man? Why care about belonging to a church, when there was *no recognized difference*, in life, spirit, or future hopes, between those who were, and those who were not members of it? Where a church is kept pure, by faithful discipline, and the power of a living faith, it assimilates to its own purity the world around it. The same high tone of morals that reigns within, will also prevail around it, to the extent of its influence. But where discipline casts no immoral person out of the church, the power of the church to purify the world is lost.

I have often been struck with the dearth of religious ideas, in communities situated as Home once was. Even the highly cultivated and literary, under such influences, have often not the least acquaintance with truths familiar to the children of a Christian household. One of the most intellectual women of Home, one not unknown in the literature of the country, once wished me to explain what "we," (Christians) "meant by atonement. She had never known what ideas we attached to it." She was once a member of a church. But when, as sometimes happens, the Holy Spirit begins to teach persons so trained, and to open their eyes to a perception of spiritual

things, the struggle of the mind with its own ignorance and errors is curious, as well as painful. Conversing, once, with one of the purest minds that adorn our land—a mind so trained, but taught in heart, by the Spirit, to an extent far beyond her intellectual perceptions of the truth, I saw evident proofs that the Life of God was begun in the soul. The spirit and power of *Love* was there. Self-denial was familiar. There was a deep sense, a personal conviction of inward depravity, that no teaching of man's native purity could shake. The worldly and spiritual were clearly discerned. The doctrinal views of Christ were very defective. There was a *feeling* of dependence on him, without any distinct knowledge of its necessity. Said I, "do you not, when you enjoy prayer and communion with God, feel such a love for, and reliance on Christ, as you know you ought not to feel on any save the infinite God?" There was an agitated pause. "Yes," she said, "and it has often troubled me, to reconcile my theory with my heart." The heart, taught of God, was right; the theory, received from the teachers of error, was wrong. With others, hearing only error, and not taught of the Spirit, the ideas of the gospel are all novelties. With the Bible in their hands, and, sometimes read, they seem utterly unacquainted

with its principles. It struck me with astonishment, once, in preaching in such a community, to see how the most familiar truths had all the force of novelties. It requires years of labor to make an adult mind, so *trained* to be ignorant, acquainted with the truths a little child easily learns and often loves. The worthy deacon who “believed as the minister did,” but was not sure what the minister believed, is no unapt representative of this class of men. Though I am concerned chiefly with the moral and spiritual results of the declension, there are other features that have forcibly struck me. True religion is eminently favorable both to industry and enlarged enterprise. Its great truths give vigor to the mind, and fit it for success in worldly pursuits. For twenty years our young men, if they had any higher enterprise or ambition, left Home for other, often distant places. Few of this class remained ; not enough to supply the places of the fathers. I can count up almost twenty old family mansions, inhabited for two hundred years, that have decayed from this cause. For an equal period a visible decline in agriculture was noticed. Good farms lying uncultivated were not rare.

On a revival of the early faith, both the agricultural prosperity of the town returned, and the active youth began to settle in Home ; till, at last, in



one section of it, a village, for the first time in its history sprang up ; a village evidently gathered as the fruit of a purer religion. The connection between a pure faith and worldly prosperity is not unknown to wicked men. I know another town, where some men who were bitterly hostile to the truths of the Bible were consulting about measures to increase the value of their property. Their village seemed about to decay. Valuable inhabitants were retained in their employment with difficulty. " We must have a church," said one. It was agreed to by all. " What shall it be ?" was the next inquiry. On mature deliberation, they decided to have a thoroughly evangelical church, as best adapted to secure an industrious, pure, refined community, increase its members, and so, ensure the enhanced value of their property. They have not been disappointed in the result. And some of them, who, in enmity to the Saviour, thus acknowledged his power to benefit mankind, have since learned the value of his grace in their own hearts.

Return we to the darker shades of the picture. A fact occurring at a later date illustrates the state of spiritual death such causes produce. There is no more evil in dancing than in jumping the rope, in itself. The abuses of it have armed pure



churches so generally against it. But it is a characteristic of a dead faith, that no difference of life or spirit is *expected* when persons unite with the church. A young and tenderly conscientious girl made a profession of her faith. The thanksgiving ball, with its midnight revelry, occurred soon after, just before the communion day. She was invited to attend. "Shall I go?" she asked one of the oldest members of the church. "Certainly; it would be foolish to decline. Religion interferes with none of our pleasures." In one sense it is so. It requires us to lay aside nothing, which, on the whole, is a source of enjoyment, at least without supplying far higher and pure sources of happiness in its stead. I never heard, in the old churches of Home, any difference between the characters of men ascribed to their profession of the faith of the gospel, *as* it was then preached. And there was no reason to do so! Our Lord told the disciples, that the world would hate them. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own. But because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The amiable qualities of the Christian are fitted to win the love of worldly persons. But when the difference of principle and spirit becomes so small that the Christian or professed disciple's life ceases to re-

prove sin, there is no ground for alienation. The most determined lover of sin need not hate *such* disciples. But the holy are like the refiner's fire. Their very presence is a restraint on sinful thoughts, feelings and conduct, such as wicked men cannot well endure. As all barriers to membership were laid aside, any one who wished could become a church member, whose conscience did not, after all, whisper the need of some fitness he did not possess to approach the table of the Lord. Even when the pastor invited some to unite, conscience led them to refuse. And though the church danced at the midnight ball, not a few disliked to see the minister there, even as a looker on. "It did not seem right." The *office* reproved their folly, long after the teachings or holy living of the man who filled it ceased to do so. "Stop sinning; the minister is coming," should be the result of his approach. And when he lives the life of faith on the Son of God, his very shadow, like that of Peter, shall check the spiritual disease of the fallen soul. His voice, though melting with tender love, shall reprove with more power than the earthquake's terror, or the whirlwind's rage.

## CHAPTER IV.

The shades grow darker—Pulpit exchanges with errorists  
—No social prayer—The closet forgotten—Neglect of  
worship—The Sabbath desecrated—Covetousness, which  
is idolatry: examples.

WHETHER the elders of the present race of our pastors were wise in refusing to exchange pulpit services with the teachers of error, many doubted. It was needful to show men that such teachers were not recognized as ministers of Christ. And outward conduct impresses most men far more than mere words. But it is certain that this non-intercourse sealed the spiritual death of many churches in which a "little strength" remained. Their pastors deemed themselves insulted; the people pitied, sympathized with them; and then, shut up to their lifeless teachings, they refused to hear the words of life at all. Many towns became, at once, missionary ground, in which it was harder to find a place to utter saving truth than in the towns of Hindostan. The bitterness of religious strife entered social life, and friends could no longer speak to friends of Christ and God

without rousing every baleful passion. The darkest days of Home were subsequent to this separation, though causes of a revival of a purer faith had arisen. The last results of religious error and an unfaithful ministry are best seen as they contrast with the rising power of a pure faith. Nay, they are not fully developed till that contrast is felt.

Social religion disappeared from Home. For eighty years tradition has no record of a prayer-meeting in the town. And when the deistical pastor, with great reluctance consented to the establishment of a Sabbath school, but two members were found in the church willing to pray in public. The popular feeling respecting prayer was shown in a remark of a plain man. A sick man, in a dying state, wished to hear prayer. The pastor was absent. None could be found to pray for him. The physician, long a member of the church, declined. Alas, he did not pray in secret ! “ Why,” said the man, “ I should think the doctor might have prayed. He has learning enough.” It did not enter into the man’s head that a humble heart was the element of acceptable prayer, or that a spiritual experience would fit a man, however poorly gifted, to pray with the dying far better than the possession of all knowledge.

The neglect of secret prayer was nearly as universal as the omission of it in the family. Not that, in hours of sickness or danger the mind never turned to God, or even used the words of petition to Him. I have smiled at the sensitiveness of many when I have asked them, "do you pray in secret?" Those who seldom or never did, always evaded it; often with some marks of displeasure. But it was plain enough they had no habits of secret prayer, no stated seasons for it, no delight in it. Among those who do pray, and love to do so, it is always easy to learn the facts respecting their habits of secret prayer. They have no motive for hiding it. But the prayerless would not be thought utterly to forget God! I could never learn, by diligent inquiry, that ten members of the churches of Home habitually prayed in secret. Their life in this respect was in keeping with their whole conduct. Private prayer, social prayer, public prayer, are all linked together in the heart that loves to pray. In a whole church one is not forgotten till the others are laid aside.

The neglect of public worship increased, as the power of the gospel ceased to be felt in the lives of its professed votaries. At a period more recent, less than one-third of the adult inhabi-

tants of Home were habitually found in all the places of public worship. The services at weddings and funerals were the only occasions on which anything like religion was seen in this dark group. But many, in sight of the church and the pastor's house, were equally negligent. Yet none reproved, none invited, none warned them. "No man cared for their souls." I always set down the neglect of public worship to the want of faithfulness in the pastor. Faithful preaching and faithful pastoral visits, with much prayer, will leave few or none to neglect the public means of grace. How unlike the early habits of the people of Home, when every occasional absence was matter of inquiry, if not of reproof!

Sabbath desecration followed, of course. There were few who made it a day of toil. It was rather a day of jollity, of social visits, of idle talk, of rides, of wandering in the fields to pick berries; a day of pleasure, instead of a season for worship, for reading, for prayer, or beneficial converse. Labor was not avoided because God forbade it, but because it was irksome. The holy day, became a holiday merely. The physical rest of the day was enjoyed, and that is a great blessing to man and beast; but its spiritual objects were worse than lost. The profound religious igno-

rance of these neighborhoods, by dwellers in a Christian town, can hardly be conceived. The name of Christ was not unknown; but his character and offices were alike forgotten. Sinful man does not "like to retain God in his knowledge." And without a faithful ministry and a living church, a Christian town, in a few years, would relapse into virtual heathenism. There are two errors, equally fatal, in the end. One is ultra spiritualism, which is so holy as to need no Sabbath, no days of worship, no union of hearts in prayer and praises. The other extreme makes religion a thing for the Sabbath, the sick bed and old age. We need a Sabbath to cultivate our spiritual nature. But truly spiritual affections go with us everywhere. The merchant of Albany, N. Y., who asked "What has religion to do with selling lumber?" had as little correct knowledge of the nature of true piety, as the man who needs no hours sacred to devotion, no Bible to guide his already perfect mind in the way of truth. In Home, in my young days, we had the lumber merchant's religion, so far as there was any. It had no power to control men's passions, no influence over their daily business.

"The love of money is the root of all evil," or of every kind and form of sin, according to the



circumstances in which the covetous, grasping spirit is placed. Sometime he plunders the poor without regard to law. At others, he uses every unfair advantage within the letter of the Statutes. The poor man may be covetous, but in the rich only does the sin become widely injurious to others. "Covetousness is idolatry." No surer mark of a fallen church is found than covetousness and the oppression of the poor on the part of the rich. Some of the richest men in Home belonged to the churches, in my boyhood. One of them, the least guilty, increased his gains by loans at usurious interest, on mortgages, which he seldom allowed to be redeemed. His immense wealth has fallen into the hands of the pious, who will use it for God and the good of man. Another died the owner of several farms obtained by loans on mortgage to those rendered needy by intemperance and other vices. For half their value he stripped them of their possessions, and then held them as tenants. What difference made it in his relation to the church?

Still another obtained almost equal wealth by means more openly criminal. By the same system of loans he obtained control over the poor. He encouraged their intemperance by paying



them for labor in rum. He despoiled them of their earnings by settling their accounts while they were half drunken. They must submit to his extortion, or be turned out of dwellings no longer their own. All these proud, ungodly men, were members of the fallen churches of Home. If they were the worst, they were the richest. Their sin did not destroy their honor. The common sense of mankind might decide that such men were not fitted for a holy heaven. But none questioned their right to a place in the churches called by the holy name of Christ. Their power for evil was greater ; their breasts more hardened than those of many others. The naturally generous despised their acts of meanness, now and then brought to public notice. But their worldly spirit too surely reigned in the churches to incur any censure. Most men did not see, in their spirit, anything so very unlike their own, or so different from that of other church members, as to require rebuke. They died, and the "people made great mourning for them." Funeral sermons spake of their social virtues, their regard for religion, their titles to the esteem of their fellow men. Who has not some virtues? Some qualities that win respect and love? When the young ruler "went away sorrowful because he

had great possessions," he showed the power of a worldly, covetous spirit over his soul. He could not give up all he had for Christ's sake. He would have been a worthy member of our churches in Home, nevertheless. Was he not so excellent that *Jesus loved him*? He had many virtues, one sin. With very many the balance is very far the other way. They have many sins, few redeeming traits. The one sin shut him out from the favor of God just as surely as if his head were gray with a life of varied crime. No sin now debases the true living churches of our Lord so much as covetousness. To give that which is entirely convenient without the sacrifice of one hour of ease, one luxury, one social comfort, one mode of increasing one's gains, is all that many deem requisite to illustrate their faith. It *does* illustrate *their* faith. It is small indeed! The few who give more freely of money, withhold time and personal labor for man's welfare. That is more valuable than money. The fewer still who appropriate a tenth of their income to benevolence and charity have reached a sublime height of self-denial to which the many dare not aspire! True, if all the churches did so much, there would be no lack of means to renew on earth the glory of paradise in one generation.

But the spirit of love in the heart is even more wanting than the gifts of gold. Both are needed to fill the world with the knowledge of Christ. In vain do we profess to consecrate our all to Christ, while we do so little for him, and by our life prove that the spirit of self-denial does not rule in our hearts. As well might Ananias and Sapphira claim the favor of God, as the members of a worldly church who profess so much, and withhold so much more than is meet, from the service of God. He who lives to himself, is not a disciple. He who heaps up gold for himself, is not the imitator of Christ. He who *makes money* for Christ, is a rare disciple, and may be set down, with a degree of certainty, as one “whose life is hid with Christ, in God.”

## CHAPTER V.

Intemperance abounding—Death and crime—Lewdness—  
The sins of the parents visited on their children—a true  
story—One covenant remembered.

IN what part of our land have not the curses of alcohol been felt, in every form of suffering and woe by which man's lot is made bitter? The only difference in the degrees in which the woe prevailed arose from the previous moral and religious state of the community. Sixty years ago drunkenness was rare in our New England towns. In 1780 a venerable relative noticed, in a small country tavern, the amount of liquors sold. It was three barrels annually. In 1830 he visited the same tavern, kept in the same old house, hardly a shingle of which was changed, and found the amount sold had increased to *thirty* barrels a year! This is perhaps, an average measure of the increased frequency of intemperate drinking in fifty years. The impulse towards it was given by the habits acquired in the army; and the rapid increase of agricultural products, especially after the beginning of this century,

without a market for them. The cheapness of grain reduced the price of distilled liquors to a point without example in the history of commerce. When the religious and moral tone of society did not arm it for resistance, the tide of woe flowed over almost every dwelling.

The early morality of Home was slowly undermined, yet never so debased as to make it, compared with its neighbors, an immoral town. At least I never thought so; though I must admit that the proportion of public crimes has been greater than in any other farming town in the State, as the records of our prison too surely tell. Writing in the prison of a distant city, without books, I cannot compare the statistics of intemperance so well. But I know the amount was great.

In a neighborhood of about two miles in circuit, enchaining the most refined portion of Home, the number of deaths, for fifteen years prior to 1836 was about seventy, not including children and youth under twenty years of age—knowing every one of them, and their personal history, two gentlemen declared that fifty of these deaths resulted from intemperance. True, in some cases, the disease that closed life was called “fever” or “consumption;” and was so, in fact; a fever of the brain and a consumption of the vital energy

of the man. But hard drinking brought on the disease; and the substitution of a softer name, only served to hide from the public, not from the neighbors, the real truth. It might wound the spirit of the mourner to call it by a harsher name. So 'colds,' 'fevers,' 'asthmas,' 'consumptions' and 'apoplexy' were suffered to give name to the remorseless evil that filled the drunkard's grave with victims. Who can severely censure these cheats of affection, which sooth our sorrow, and impose on no one! Those who were thus cut down, were of every class in society, every age and both sexes. Intemperate women *always* died of consumption and fevers! In the darkest hours of the reign of alcohol, the idea of a *drunken woman* was abhorrent to public feeling, at Home. Such things existed, but little was said of them.

In my own history occurred another proof of the vices of alcohol. My venerable guardian, one of the best guardians an orphan ever had, on the final adjustment of our accounts, exhibited an item of nearly a thousand dollars of uncollected debts. Filled with surprise, I asked the reason. With deep emotion he replied, "It would have turned forty families out of doors to do it." They were debts for liquors, sold by the small quantity, in those days of darkness when kind, good men

were blinded to the evils of this traffic. I knew the history of every family. They were all poor, after the lapse of eighteen years. A score of bodies had been carried from their dilapidated houses to the drunkard's grave. Vice, misery, want clung to them. Lewdness, petty thefts, brawls, idleness, rags, disease, sudden death, there, as elsewhere, followed in the train of *Rum*. Who shall not bless God for the dawn of the bright day of total abstinence? To scores of families in Home it has carried peace, and prepared the way for the reception of spiritual blessings.

Vice and irreligion help each other. The vicious hate the purity of the gospel. The votaries of a lax faith have lost the highest restraints upon crime. The *cross* has more power to purify the social life than all the maxims of prudence or the motives that appeal to man's fears and hopes.

So few, out of the circle of "moral reform" agencies are aware of the extent of the sin of lewdness, that it is difficult to speak of it without exciting prejudice and giving offence. That it was more prevalent in Home during the last generation than the present, or in any previous period of its history, is beyond all doubt. That men high in rank were not free from it is known. The extent to which it prevailed among the in-

temperate and the ignorant, who were, by the causes already narrated, thrown beyond the reach of such religious influences as existed, can hardly be known. The evil began to pass away before the public mind was roused to its enormity or its extent. In one respect I always admired the feelings common in Home, on this topic. The fallen *woman* was an object of pity, not of contempt and scorn. Drive the lewd *man* from society if you will, but welcome his victim back to the paths of virtue and honor.

In no other instance is that fearful law of retribution, the "visiting of the sins of the fathers upon their children," so frequently illustrated as in this. The wealthiest, and one of the most honored men in Home, in a past generation, was a libertine. One son inherited his wealth, his honors. He, too, followed in the same career of sin. In the third generation his name and race were extinct. Another instance of it I must not omit, for the striking lessons it imparts.

D. was a well-educated girl, belonging to a wealthy family of Home. Endowed with superior talents, and remarkable personal beauty and grace, her intense vanity, and strong passions, without the restraints of the gospel, made her an almost willing victim of the seducer. He was a husband, a



father. She fled to the city, to hide her sin from the eyes of all who knew her. There, in the process of time, she became the owner of one of those festering sores on social life, a public brothel. In that den of shame and crime, she gave birth to two sons, Samuel and James. Their fathers were never known. Not wholly lost to the impulses of nature, she loved these more, worse than orphans, with an intense, idolatrous affection. Educated herself, she resolved to spare no expense, to hesitate at no crime even, to give them the best education the land afforded. Doubtless, too, as I have known in other like cases, the guilty mother, her spirit gnawed by the pangs of remorse, longed to save her sons from lives of sin. Such inconsistencies are often seen. She determined they should never know their mother's dreadful trade, nor their own dark origin.

The gains of sin were hoarded to be lavished on these sons. They were both sent to Harvard, and graduated with distinguished honor. Their minds were minds of great power and brilliancy.

Samuel, in that part of his career, became a devoted follower of Christ. His heart burning with holy love, he decided to become a minister of the gospel. Little did he know that the wages of whoredom supplied the means of his support at

Andover; little did others suspect it. There, too, he was conspicuous for his mental endowments, his scholarship, his stainless purity of life.

James, even more highly gifted, entered the Harvard Medical School. At this period he became acquainted with and corrupted by the vices of his mother's house. I knew him well. A more agreeable, well-informed companion one seldom meets. But he soon added intemperance to lewdness. An hospital student, availing himself of his chemical knowledge to neutralize their medicinal effects, he drank up even the *tinctures* prepared for the sick, for the sake of the alcohol in which they were dissolved! Driven from his rank and profession by his vices, he went to sea, as a common sailor. Four years later, rotten with loathsome diseases, he died as the fool dieth, in the same hospital where he had once studied the healing art. The sin of his parents slew him!

But the cup of retribution was not yet full. Samuel early became the pastor of one of our best churches, not far from Home. Clear and forcible in his preaching, sound in faith, warm in his affections, he was useful and beloved by his excellent flock. His works praised him. He became a frequent contributor to the religious

press. His excellent pen won praises from which his humility and modesty shrank.

He engaged, with applause, in the controversies of the time. Who has not read his letters on the existence and agency of fallen spirits? Ascribed at the hour, to many of our leading divines, they were the fruits of *his* leisure.

As if Providence would not, even for the sake of this excellent man, waive the law of retribution—in a few months he died of a broken heart. Men said disease slew him. The disease was a wounded spirit. His pure and sensitive mind, lacerated, in every faculty by sins of which he was the innocent victim, could not endure the load of life. The body was broken in its struggles to be free. The sins of his parents slew him, also!

The wretched, guilty mother still lives, lives in sin, without God, without hope. “Keep thyself pure” is the lesson, written in characters of *judgment* by the finger of Providence on every page of man’s dark history. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Nor is that law of social retribution which thus connects the sins of the parent with the life of the child unjust, or intended as a mere punishment. It is designed to restrain men from crime by the before-known judgments their sins may bring upon

the objects of their warmest love. If their children imitate their parents' sins, their doom is plainly just. If, like one of these young men, they turn from sin, it is no punishment *to them* to remove them to heaven. While their sufferings, as pure and innocent victims of a parent's crimes, still more impressively show the evil nature of sin. The law, then is wise and beneficent in its aims. It is only the counterpart of the other law of blessing, by which God "shows mercy to thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments," and to their children for many generations.

If the sins and worldliness and departures from the faith, in a past generation, brought into being a race "who knew not God," no doubt the same God remembered his "covenant which he made with our fathers," and counted up all their fervent prayers and holy vows, when he began to revive again his work of grace in the hearts of their posterity, in our own day. The sacred spot where the first family altar was built in Home, and where seven generations offered the sacrifices of prayer and praise, cannot, will not, in coming time, be the home of unbelief and sin! No, our *fathers'* God will not so forget his mercy! Though, for a brief space, "he hid, as it were,

his face from us," he will return again, and raise up a holy race, who shall keep his covenant ; for he will write it in their hearts. " He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations."

In vain does error vaunt itself on its temporary possession, of the houses where our fathers worshipped, and the funds they devoted to the support of the worship of the Saviour they loved. He will yet restore them all. Error has its office. It may linger still, that the sons of God may be made manifest by their rejection of it. Already its power over the popular mind is gone. The sentiments of its votaries are daily assimilated more and more to the faith of the gospel. And, what is far more delightful, to a true son of the Pilgrims, the " rock of the Spirit" in the hearts of many, in the fruits of holiness, is even more manifest than the evident progress in correct intellectual views of divine things.

So shall the next generation—that in which my children shall mingle—be united once more, both in the pure faith and holy living that prepared our fathers to be the founders of a great, and free nation.

## CHAPTER VI.

Party spirit—Preaching *at* men—Uses of sects and parties  
—Bible politics—Supremacy of the Law of God.

PARTY SPIRIT is not an evil in its own nature. Men agree in their views. They deem them important to their own welfare and that of their fellow men. They desire to see them adopted by all, and controlling the actions of all. The laws of their nature lead them to associate together to spread their views and accomplish their designs. They talk, they meet, they write, they print, they sing, they pray, to gain their ends. Common objects and pursuits call forth, in some degree, their affections, their passions, their zeal. They become, by use, and feeling, bound to those with whom they labor for common ends—just in proportion to their ideas of the nature of these ends, and the toils and difficulties they surmount in gaining them, will be the strength of their union with their fellows, and their alienation from those who resist them.

All this is proper, is right. It accords with the

highest and best principles and laws of our mental and social nature. The mind and heart make men partisans. The thoroughly selfish and idle and sluggish only are not so, in some things, at least.

The evils of party spirit are found only in its excesses and abuses. With our fallen nature, it is hard to avoid them, even when the objects we seek are high, honorable, holy. If the objects are right, and the means we employ are wise and right also, no degree of zeal or party spirit that is necessary to secure the ends, is ever excessive. A want of zeal, in such a case, is the error.

These principles apply alike to the religious, the political, and the social concerns of man. Those who are too idle to think, or too imbecile to decide, and too sluggish for action, may deem otherwise. But mankind will have few benefits to thank them for. Such forms of party, or more properly, social action, are needed to call forth man's highest powers. Men talk idly when they would have us believe that they can banish the spirit of party from politics or religion. They must destroy man's power of loving; nay, root out every emotion from his soul; make him indifferent to the approval of his fellows, careless of their censures, and reckless of all obligations to them, be-



fore the emulation, rivalry and competition, that form the grosser elements of party are rooted out ; grosser, yet not evil. The evil still is in excess or abuse. When party is directed to unworthy ends ; when detraction, slander, forgery, bribery, falsehood, or any other sinful means are resorted to, to attain them, party spirit becomes a ruthless demon, riding on a stormy sea of human passions, dashing its waves of crime over all that is pure and valuable in man's life.

There are evils connected with almost all sects in religion, because men, from their sinful passions, reject some truth, or exaggerate its value, or resort to sinful means to gain power over the conscience. But the benefits of the competition of sects far outweigh those minor evils. He who would blot out from being *one* of the sects which yet, with admitted errors, embrace the great doctrines of the cross, is an enemy to the hope of man ! He would, if successful, delay for a century the triumph of that Redeemer, who is equally the object of supreme love and reverence to the truly pious in all sects. Every evangelical sect enters some neglected part of the vineyard ; brings to light some valuable truths, or points out some new modes of action, besides inculcating the great truths in which all unite, and which form the proper basis of a Christian life.



Even sects of errorists are not without value, in showing Christians their sins, and compelling them to greater fidelity and more self-denial. Entire union of opinion and action is desirable. But life, power, activity, diffusion, are far more so. In the revival of pure religion in the Pilgrim churches, sects not known to our fathers, holding views in some points—as we judge—erroneous, have acted a most important part. Neither here, nor in the world at large, can one common faith dispense with their labors without great loss.—I never preach against *sects*, but against every *sin* I can discover in any, *especially in my own*. This is the true road to peace, union, harmony, activity and perfect love.

In political life sects are equally useful, in the present state of man. They are no longer masses of men led blindly by demagogues; but *minds* ruled by thought, influenced by discussions, by reflection, by principles of action. There may be, there are, excesses of party zeal. Bad men are magnified into gods; men of feeble intellects into giants; corrupt measures are made to seem all-important to the well-being of the land, in *some* men's eyes. But still, every contest, governed as it now is, by the power of the press, that is, by *thought*, read, spoken, reflected on, becomes an

invaluable part of the education of the national mind. The more important the principles involved, the more excited and radical the debates become, the more valuable is the strife to the interests of man, end as it may. For truth, justice, right, will finally triumph.

That the occasional excesses of such contests do harm, become the sources of corruption to individual minds, and of religious declension in churches, is true. In one or two periods of our history, this has been illustrated. When, for instance, one of our pastors in Home so far forgot his calling and duties as to invite a gross political assault on a distinguished statesman in his own church, on the Sabbath, on account of political differences, it was a gross sin. The evil it inflicted time could not wholly remove.

The heat of the partisan is not for the pulpit, or the Sabbath. These have higher aims and duties. Yet is not the pastor to neglect to preach political truths, at his peril. The Bible lays down the principles that should control governments, as well as individual men. It leaves no community at liberty to place an immoral man in office. The ruler must be just. He must be one who will "judge the cause of the widow, the orphan, the poor, the oppressed." To vote for men of a dif-

ferent character is a crime. It is every pastor's duty to point it out, and warn the flock against the sin. The duty of rulers to regard the Sabbath, to frame just laws, to protect the weak, to succor the oppressed, to cultivate peace and harmony, and avoid the occasions of strife and war; the great principles of equality and purity on which all laws should be based; these are as much a part of the Scripture doctrines as the atonement of Christ. Even the claims of minuter measures, and particular men to support, so far as these involve moral or religious principle, it is sometimes the faithful pastor's duty to discuss. He should do it with dignity, candor, holy zeal for God, and human welfare. He will offend some; so does fidelity in any part of his duties. But he will benefit and please more. Some forty years ago, on the eve of an excited contest, a single sermon, by an eminent and spiritual pastor decided the State election. One who reads it *now*, can see in it only a vindication of great and pure principles, such as ought always to regulate the conduct of men in their civil duties. The separation of the citizen from the Christian; the formation of one set of rulers to govern the man in civil life, and another to control his conduct in the church, is an error destructive to pure morals and good gov-

ernment. If the citizen shall establish rules and laws, diverse from the Bible, and claim for them an equal or higher authority over him, as a citizen, he usurps the authority of God, and defies his wrath. There is no surer mark of the fallen state of the slave-holding churches, than their attempts to cover up all the sins and crimes they connive at, by the plea that the civil law sanctions them. Enough for a *Christian* that the *law of God* condemns them. So in all other cases.

The churches can never regain their just power over the human mind ; the pastoral office will never be invested with its proper dignity, till the *supremacy of God's laws* over all the constitutions, laws and civil conduct of men is faithfully enforced, on every proper occasion, and *felt* by all who call themselves Christians. The timid and sluggish shrink from a bold conflict with human passion. They will "preach the cross only"—would they did ! Would God that they exalted the "Prince of the *kings* [rulers, law-givers, magistrates, judges, officers] of the earth" in men's thoughts, till the power of His cross was confessed in every law, every election to office, every form of civil polity. The idea that the cross has relation to the affections only ; or, that it is the object of the gospel to renovate the heart, and therefore, that the pas-

tor may omit the plain and constant enforcement of its claim to control the life, is a most pernicious error—"I aim to make men Christians by imbuing their hearts with holy love." That is right; only "go on, to perfection." Let not your faith be without works, or fruit in the life. Let not men learn that they may consult *their own will*, in all the laws that govern the rights to life, liberty, property, purity and honor; and still be good subjects of Christ, if they regard his will in their other relations and personal concerns. The great idea of the gospel is, that *Christ must rule the whole man*, in all his life, all his relations, all his duties. It is not the Christian's aim to govern his affections, only, or his conduct in private life alone, or his public action merely, by the laws of the Bible. Each and all, from his birth till he enters the Permanent Life before him, are to be governed by the word of God. To enforce a wicked law, as a magistrate, is much more wicked than to violate, in single cases, a just law. The evil is greater, longer, and more widely felt. To forget our social duties to our neighbors, is, in some respects, a greater evil, than to cherish sin in our own hearts, for the same reason. But in the well instructed, living, loving disciple, the holy affections that rule his heart will secure the

control of holy principles over every part of his outward life. The corrupt politician is not a good Christian. The maker and executor of wicked laws cannot truly and really obey God (from the heart). They "tithe the mint, anise and cumin," yet allow their conduct, when it concerns the social welfare of thousands to be such as God abhors and his word condemns. "The weightier matters" are not done. Not so can they please or honor God. How is it men, who in other points of view, seem to be good men, justify themselves in such errors? The truth is this, our consciences are at rest, and we hope for Divine favor, when we *conform to the standard of duty in our own minds*; no matter how erroneous or even criminal that standard may be, in fact, when compared with the law of God. Hope and peace, and devout affections can exist with almost any amount of error and sin. And the moment the supremacy of anything but the teachings of the Holy Spirit and Word of God is admitted, that instant we lay the basis for false hopes, peace which comes only from our own hearts, and not from God; and for a devotion, that, however sincere, pleases God no more than the equally sincere worship of the Brahmin at the shrine of Sivâ. Isaiah I. and LVIII.

No doubt, the excesses of party strife had some influence in destroying the remnants of piety in Home. But there, as elsewhere, the neglect to enforce the supremacy of God's law, and the consequent divorce of men's religion and politics, had a far more disastrous influence. An eminent statesman, and true Christian once said to me, that nothing had so much contributed to expose the ministry to contempt, in our country, as their agency, in this divorce of spiritual religion from the political and social duties of life. Men want a religion that will regulate their daily business, their "selling lumber," their voting, their travelling, their social visits, their entire life. Such a religion honors its great Author; and the vivid and tender and bold enforcement of its claims, will clothe his ministers with almost Divine power.



## CHAPTER VII.

Relics of faith—A mother's spirit in heaven—Old associations—The illustration—Old books—Conscience recognizes the truth—Literature and religion—The Libraries—Home, a mission field!—The faithful preacher—Social prayer revived—The "new commandment" obeyed—Religion and education.

THE stately ship that

"Walked the waters like a thing of life,"

is driven on the rocks, and the power of the waves breaks her strength, despoils her of her beauty, and scatters the fragments along the sands. Still, in every piece, though it is incapable of giving again a home and a shelter to the bold sailor, the eye of skill sees proofs of what it once was. Science could even tell her tonnage, her model, from pieces hardly worth saving for fire-wood. There were relics of the shipwreck of the faith in the churches of Home, long after they became "dead," so dead that all hope of recovery by a power from within had ceased. But they were few. Thirty years ago there were only about twenty in all the town who even professed to be converted persons, or to have



had any other religious experience than other worldly persons. Neither of the pastor's were of the number. One of them not only openly admitted it, but ridiculed all pretences to regeneration, in any other sense than a reformation from vice. Still, and it often surprised me, the people habitually made a distinction between the converted and those who were not ! Those who did not believe that conversion, or any internal, spiritual renovation of man's affections was necessary to fit them for heaven, still saw there *was* a difference between those who loved God and those who did not. Its nature few had any idea of ; but none doubted that those who spoke of their sense of sin, their peace, their hopes, their joys, their Saviour, had found in religion something that most men had not. The lives of such persons were watched with great eagerness. Every error, every passion, every natural foible was noted, in contrast with the feelings of the heart, in which the converted told them the basis of piety was laid. The few pious, at this time, were either aged persons, or in middle life, with perhaps two exceptions. One of these, a beautiful flower, in all the sweetness of its bloom, was cut down before the Christian character was matured, though not before intimate friends had learned to love it, and hope much

from its fruit. Blessed mother ! thou art among the holy ones, who stand in the presence of the Lord ! If thou dost ever stop praising, and cease to strike thy harp in the heavenly choir, is it not to pity human woe ; to succor thy tempted child ; to wipe away the penitent tear from the burning cheek, the cold sweat of remorse from the brow, and pour consolation into the broken heart ? Are not these the work of the ministering spirits ? Did not the eye of boyhood feast on the spiritual beauty of thy face, the *beauty of death*, when the eye filled with rapture saw “ within the veil,” and the spirit tasted heavenly manna, to give it vigor for its upward flight ? Once thou didst recall the mind from the heavenly vision. Calling the little, the only son to thy couch, the thin, wasted hand, whose soft touch is never forgotten, parted his light hair ; and with many a murmured prayer thou didst invoke the orphan’s God to be his father. “ Mother, I give him to you, train him up for God,” broke from thy dying lips. And then thou didst leave the body of death to put on immortality. Mother, is thy son forgotten, amid the blaze of the glory of the celestial city ? Does not the glorious One still wear our nature ? Is he not still “ touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and alive to human sympathies ? And when the

circle of earth's worshippers bow before him, does He not bid them cherish every pure emotion of our nature ? Is a mother's love banished from Heaven ? Art thou not saying to thy child, " Hasten, put on the robes of holy light the Lamb giveth thee, and come up hither ! " And when the Lord revealed himself, in mercy to thy child, and said his sins were forgiven, wert thou not there ? Was it not thy form, thy face, thy smiles, that formed a part of the cloud of glory that surrounded Him, when his word of peace was spoken ? Aye, and thou wilt welcome him, with all a mother's holy heart, when, perhaps thy own gentle hand does death's office, to open before his eyes the glory on which thou didst look, when thy dying lips blessed him. Blessed mother, thy son will come ! He longs to meet thee !

The few really pious, surrounded and chilled by the atmosphere of death, *just lived* ; their light shone not brightly enough to penetrate the thick gloom ; or at least to scatter it.

Those who love error, know well how hard it is to root out a traditionary respect for the truths of pure religion. The very words of the language have the truth so associated with them, that no human skill can ever change the impression they make on the mind. Those who sought to destroy

the faith of the sons of the Pilgrims knew it well. Hence in years gone by, their watchful endeavor to avoid all those terms in customary use, to designate the several truths of our faith. While they spoke of the "atonement," it was in vain to try to destroy the sense of dependence on the blood of Christ for the pardon of our sins. While they told of the regeneration, men would not forget that their fathers, and even a few who still lived, thought that man's nature was corrupted, and needed an entire moral change to prepare him for heaven. The omission of the old Doxologies of praise to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, alarmed the consciences of men who had long and complacently listened to teachings that denied the doctrine of the Triune God. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." The feeling the words express, applies equally to the places, names and forms of worship and faith. Men will embrace error, because it is preached in the house where their fathers praised God ; they would reject it in another place. So their associations with the truth lingers, also, after its power over the mind and heart is lost, so far as their salvation from sin is concerned.

One day I sat by the side of one of the most intelligent and conscientious members of the church

in Home; one who had much semblance, if not the reality of spiritual life. Incidentally, the pastor was spoken of as not believing in the atonement. It was referred to, merely as a matter perfectly well known. She became silent, her eyes filled with tears. Her heart was grieved. For twenty years she had heard the great sacrifice for sin denied, derided, treated as a heathenish corruption of the faith. Still, she could not believe it *possible* that the pastor denied the *atonement*! He certainly spoke of it in his sermons. And, in her mind, the power of old associations connected the good old Bible doctrine with the word, in spite of years of false teaching. Her own hopes rested, indeed, on the faith of the fathers. She has gone to prove the strength of that tried foundation! When did it ever fail? "The heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," but none who ever reposed on the atoning blood of Christ for the pardon of sin shall find their hopes vain. Such faith will purify their hearts, and teach them holy living, support them in holy dying, and open the gates of His revealed glory to the ascending spirit.

Another thing contributed to keep alive traditional respect for the gospel. It was the multitude of *old choice books* in Home; the legacy of

a reading, praying race. Every old family dwelling has its relics; a volume of Baxter, Bunyan, Mather, Hancock, Clark, Owen, Jeremy Taylor, Henry, More, Carew, Gill, Latimer, Horseley, and a score more, known, read and loved by the earlier generations. Some are sadly worn, the old clasps gone, a cover lost, chapters torn out, volumes missing; but enough left, and taken often enough from the old closets, for curiosity's sake, to keep alive some regard for the faith of the fathers. Probably a thousand unmutilated volumes of choice and rare old books still exist in Home. Those who never read, will not hear of parting with them! They are family relics, and bear a sacred character. In such an old torn volume I first feasted on that great poem for all ages, the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Invested with all the charms and spirit of poetry, without its forms, more true to human nature than even Shakspeare, rich in all the varied forms of Christian experience; it is a romance to charm the young, a guide full of wisdom for the most gifted and matured. Bunyan was a man for all ages of our race, for all time. What a crown is his!

Words *are* ideas to most men, "living powers," as Coleridge has it, not the mere vehicles of thought. The power of the old associations I

speak of was occasionally felt, when by any chance a preacher of the old faith entered the pulpits of Home. Such instances were rare, especially after exchanges with erroneous teachers ceased. But their sermons were never forgotten, and were often referred to. If the pastors, in hours of sorrow, or at other times, preached with more solemnity and point than usual, the remark ever was, "Why, he preached almost like Mr. So-and-So;" showing, that the occasional exhibitions of gospel truth, and the force of old associations had established in the mind a *higher standard* of truth and of pastoral fidelity than that to which they were used. In a few instances, in later times, conversions to Christ may be traced to this source. The old cherished family Bibles, in which often the names of ten generations are written; the old tomb-stones that even now are hardly legible, on which their names were again inscribed; the old family mansions in which they prayed and gave thanks; the old books they loved to read, all these must pass away, and mingle with the dust before these old and blessed associations shall die out of the mind, and the Puritan's faith become a matter of mere history, even if none of the living race still loved it and knew its saving power.

God has many ways of reviving the power of a



pure faith in his churches. Sometimes he comes in majesty, "suddenly to his temple," and a community is born in a day. But, in every case I ever knew, such displays of his grace occurred where a large number of minds had been before instructed in the truth. The power of sympathy is essential to an extended revival; and that cannot exist much beyond the circle of those who, in their understandings, assent to the same general principles of faith. Grace acts according to, and not against these and all other laws of our nature. In a town where religion had so decayed, as in Home, a longer process of regeneration was needed. The seed was to be sown by the way-side, in the fields, everywhere, 'here a little, there a little,' as time and changes fitted individual minds to receive it. When so much is to be done, and the soil to be tilled is so little prepared to bring fruit to perfection, many agencies are needed, before the golden harvest is ripe. And these agencies are not all strictly religious in their character. The revival of literature preceded the religious awakening of the fifteenth century. Indeed the latter would hardly have been possible, without the first to prepare for it, unless at the expense of three more such centuries of blood as followed the first proclamation of



the gospel. The same work indeed, was to be done, but by a new power, that of the *press*, which gives to one mind the influence of ten thousand tongues.

In Home the first agencies in the revival of a pure faith were similar.

Two young men, men of intelligence and serious thought, but not pious, were the first to do anything that acted permanently on the popular mind. A social library, comprising the best works in history and general literature was started, by their agency. It was the source of renewed *thought* in many minds. Quickened intellects will often turn to religious ideas,—some more naturally than others. Emotion follows thought, as well as excites it. And the value of the religious character that is formed, often depends chiefly on the state of the mind before it is subjected to the control of holy love. That these young men, one of whom had a pious mother, and the other a native of another place, had ideas of religion much in advance of their townsmen is certain. They saw the darkness around them. They sought to remove it, by such means as an awakened, but not renewed heart may employ. Besides the general impulse they and a few others gave to reading and thought, they formed an extensive moral and religious library. It embraced the

most valuable religious literature then accessible, at cheap rates, with not a little of error and some folly. But it placed the works of Baxter, Law, Watts, Doddridge, and the sermons of some eminent American writers, together with much religious biography, in the hands of many who had no other means of learning the true nature of the gospel. True, the "veil" still remained "on their hearts" in reading these volumes, as well as the Bible. There was none to teach them what these things meant. The pastors preached *nothing*, or else in opposition to the truths the books contained. Still, it was a dawning of light. It supplied the only religious reading known to the generation then on the stage, save their occasional glances at the pages of some old Puritan volume. The few pious took great delight in them. The naturally thoughtful read them, with care, and the fallow ground of their hearts was broken up, and in some measure prepared to hear the truth preached. In a few, in humble life, these books perhaps, became the means of conversion.

Some such have died, of whom the Christian had hope, though their light was feeble. Piety obscured by error, repressed by contempt, with none to cheer the heart, and with imperfect views of its obligations, has very little active power, in the igno-

rant and obscure. And grace does not so violate nature, and set at nought the social constitution of man, as to make it otherwise, save in rare cases.

I have said that many towns became in fact, missionary fields. Home was so in every important respect, if a large population, living in ignorance or neglect of Christ constitutes one. So one of the few godly pastors near Home regarded it. He was a young, ardent man, pious in spirit, not without genius, trained in those clear views of doctrinal truth that distinguished the writings of his eminent instructor, the late venerable pastor of Franklin. This young man became pastor of a church in a town adjoining in which a little light lingered. Henceforth his life was one of toil. His style of preaching was bold, fearless, manly, full of reasoning, sometimes lofty in thought, and sublime in denunciations of woe to the guilty. It lacked somewhat the tender spirit of Christ. But for some classes of minds it was just what was needed to break the slumbers of ages. He sought out the scattered few who still loved the old ways in which the fathers trod. His labors were blessed to the people of Home. He brought them together, for the first time in eighty years of the annals of Home, for social prayer and praise. Henceforth the *social prayer meeting* was never lost. Two or three met together, and

the Lord was there. He placed in their hands those volumes of great and clear thought, *Emmons' Sermons*. He preached the gospel from house to house, wherever he could gain access. Few of the rich welcomed him ; many cursed him. His preaching, in keeping with his model, was full of instruction. A Christian formed under its influence must needs be a thinking one. It was very discriminating in respect to the nature and proofs of holiness in the heart and life. It tried the spirit most thoroughly. None could easily be familiar with such books and such sermons, and mistake his own true character. The growth of piety in the hearts of those who were spiritual before, was marked. They became active. They began to reprove sin, to rebuke error, to warn them to repentance. The Lord added a few to their number, including one or two of the most respected and intelligent women in Home. Great decision of character marked these struggling disciples. If some, at times, showed a want of meekness, it was true that their trials were severe. But in general, their meekness was great. And every one had occasion to say, " behold how these love one another." They lived, in most instances, at a distance from each other. There was very little to bring them together, save the love of Christ. And when they met, it was like the

meeting of tenderly attached friends. Their faces shone. For hours I have seen two or three stand, exposed to the sun's hot rays, or the winter's cold, talking of their hopes, joys, sorrows; of their Christ, the fountain of their life. Neighbors would pass by, and speak to them; hours would elapse, but wholly absorbed in their great theme, they knew it not. It was the exhibition of new and strange feelings. For the first time in almost a century, the *power of brotherly love* was set before the minds of the people of Home. They were mocked, insulted, derided, sneered at, laughed at, but still, more and more *respected*, every day. People wondered what they found in religion to talk so much about! Some were accused of neglecting their social duties, to wander away to distant meetings, or to talk and pray; but the accuser knew better. Some few were persons of great intelligence and high standing. It was a great mystery to many, how such persons could take the delight they did in visiting some of the most obscure and illiterate persons in town. "It was very strange," it was said, "that religion need lead people into *low* company!" As if such a term could apply to those in whom the *Saviour* had taken up his abode! True, they were ignorant of literature. Their language was not always elegant or correct. Their logic was

worse ; but they loved *Christ*, and that changed their whole nature. That refined their manners. The Bible, always in their hands, and *loved*, gave dignity to their language and topics for conversation. The Lord, who is “the *wisdom* of God,” taught them truths more important than any known to those who despised them. The constant familiarity with great truths educated their minds. How often have I noticed a feeble intellect made vigorous by this new, living power !

Strange that sin should so blind men that they should ever dream that hearty love for the Holy Author of man’s intellect, could do otherwise than ennoble the mind ! Look at the world’s history. Just where the faith of Christ has the most power, there the masses of mind are best educated. No material progress or improvements in education come from those who are not humble Christians. The greatest discovery in modern times was made on Plymouth Rock, by Carver, Alden and Bradford. It is the Free School, open to every child, rich and poor, without pay, and sustained by the property of the community. That gave power to the press. That is now renovating the world. That is destroying superstition. That converts the despotisms of the continent into wise, patriotic governments. A people educated in Free

Schools cannot be oppressed. Give the American slaves a year's schooling, and no earthly power could rivet their fetters another hour. The masses of mankind will own their social redemption to the little band of Plymouth Rock.

As with masses of men, so with smaller bodies and individual minds. A religious community read more, think more; converse more on literary topics, write more for the press than one where the power of the gospel is lost, either by the prevalence of errors in theory, or corrupt morals. For example, in a little town in Massachusetts, inhabited wholly by shoe-makers, and embracing less than 2000 inhabitants, there are more *Literary Periodicals* taken, than in the Capital of Virginia. This is an indication of an almost universal truth—Piety and knowledge, in the masses, are ever united. Corrupt religion, and you dethrone the power that gives energy to the intellect. That power is holy love, the great source of activity in all the Universe of God.

In the revival of a purer faith in Home, there has been a marked increase of attention to education, more thought, more reading of periodicals and books, more *production* of literature. In a word, all the evidences of a better educated town. The gospel makes the simple wise, as well as saves the guilty from death.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE BELLE OF HOME.

I. *Life's dawn.*

WAS she beautiful? Even now her faded face has lines of beauty. She was rather above the medium stature. Her form, constrained by no corsage, was perfect in outline. Dressed in a taste partly her own, and partly conformed to the *mode*, her beauty was rather shaded, not injured by it. Her skin was pure as the Parian marble. Every motion was graceful, easy. Her dancing was like that of the fairies. Her features were well formed; but the broad forehead, and clear hazel eye, full of intelligence, gave an expression of dignity rather than gentleness to her face. Yet the gentlest of human beings was she. She would not tread on the worm or the ant. Had they not life, and a right to their share of enjoyment? Of all our youth, none excelled her in the vigor of her strong intellect, and sound judgment; none were better versed in literature. She was rather proud; proud of an old, honored name; proud of



station, wealth, intellect, education, beauty, and the applause all these gave her. Is it strange? Yet who more truly modest? Who less assuming? Who more gentle to inferiors? Perhaps the very consciousness of her own elevated position saved her from harshness to them; it does so affect proud persons. But who had a warmer heart? Nay, who united such self-control with a more intensely passionate nature? She was not vain; pride prevented that. Enemies she could not have; she was not vied, for she treated none unkindly. She loved gaiety; and the circles to which she had access were gay. They were the wealthy, educated, but *not* pious circles of Home and of our cities. She had read her Bible; nor were religious authors forgotten. But there was no example of piety in her father's house; no early education of the mind and affections under the influence of the gospel. She was "without God," though not without high hopes of present and future joys. She was kind to the poor, when it came in her way; but what could she know of poverty? What should call the courted and petted daughter of luxury to the abodes of want and sin?

She loved, and was loved in return. He was one whom she had known from childhood. In in-

tellectual strength he was her fit companion. In learning, his University sent forth few equals, of his years. His manly person and manly character were all that woman could ask in the object of her passionate love. And her love was passionate; all the strength of her nature was poured into this tide of love. Was he not worthy to be her heart's idol? His very calling seemed to sanctify such an idolatrous love. He was about to become the pastor of a refined, intelligent and rich church, in a county seat. That he was a truly converted man, nobody in their circle supposed. Neither they, nor the church, nor he deemed it important. He was amiable, gifted, serious; he had made it his *profession*. True, there had been whispers of excesses over the cup, in college. But that, of course, a clergyman would avoid. Besides, in those days every *gentleman*, as a part of the dignity of his character, must have a dozen kinds of liquors on his sideboard. There was no danger. Still, for some family reason their union was not to take place for two or three years. What matter? Should they not meet, write, and ever love? Besides, she was *not* quite conscious of fitness for the duties of a parson's wife; and she was young; only nineteen. If life continued, what promise of the future could be fairer? Earth's blessings and joys were sure, and heaven's were not so *very*

hard to obtain. What evil had she ever done? So dawned life on ELLEN C——.

## II. *The day.*

“Did you ever hear of such a thing? why Ellen C. is a going to have a Sunday school, to teach all the children in the town to be Christians! She must be crazy.” “Where did she get such foolish whims? Such things were never heard of in Home before. True, in old times, I have heard my father say, they used to teach children the catechism. But that has long been laid aside, and with good reason. Nobody *now* believes that children need any religion to fit them for heaven.”

“Very true, deacon; it is of no use to try to make Christians of children. They are all innocent, till they grow up. And it is time enough then to attend to religion.”

“I agree with you, 'Squire. Ellen must be crazy. Where did she get the idea?”

“My wife was there yesterday, and says she has just returned from Portland. She says Ellen insulted her.”

“Insulted your wife! A lady like Ellen!”

“It amounted to that, deacon. My wife was there, on a social visit. Ellen would scarcely talk of anything but religion, all the afternoon.

It was nothing but ‘faith,’ and ‘Christ,’ and the ‘new birth.’ At last she got my wife into her chamber and began to warn her to repent, and even wept. Finally she offered to pray with her, and prayed for her just as if she was a heathen. If that is not an insult, what is? My wife, you know, was a member of our church before Ellen was born, and is as good a Christian as any woman in Home. And then, to crown all, she began to beg her to pray with our children, every day, that they might become Christians. That, I suppose, is what this Sunday school means.”

“It is wonderful! I agree with you, she must be crazy. I thought such things had ceased among educated and enlightened men.”

The magistrate was an old member of our church. And truly, the town was in an uproar, for such a quiet one. There were then not more than ten or twelve Sabbath schools in our land. In Home, religious education for the young had long been voted needless, by the most respectable people in town. Out of the little circle of the pious it was wholly uncared for. Parents, indeed, taught their children to avoid gross sins, like lying, oaths, and theft, and to be kind and obedient. But nobody thought of making them religious. What need of it?

Ellen was changed. The lover of worldly pleasure she had ceased to be. The Bible was her companion. Her closet was heaven revealed on earth. She loved social life, as much as ever; but her whole aim seemed to be to lead her friends to Christ, a Saviour of whose character and offices both they and she had been profoundly ignorant, a year before. It was no reformation in morals, but a change in the heart, that formed the theme of her discourse. The *soul*, laden with forgotten sin, and hastening to the bar of God, was the object of her prayers, her solicitude her love. Literature and the elegances of life were not forgotten; but the welfare of the soul was first in her daily thoughts. The 'Squire did not understand such feelings; the deacon did not; the parson did not. This love for the souls of men was a novelty in their circle. 'True, the few pious people in town talked so. But they were all persons advanced in life. "To see one," as the minister's wife said, "so young, so intelligent and lovely, at the age when she ought to *enjoy life*, adopting such views, was a pity!"

What had changed gay Ellen, to praying Ellen? She had passed the summer in a distant State, on a visit. There she listened to the preaching of Payson. Won by his eloquence to attend

to the truths he uttered, the Holy Spirit taught her that she was, what she had hardly ever thought of before, a sinner ready to perish without a Saviour. That Saviour was soon manifested in his glory, and received as the object of love and worship. Her strong mind soon perceived the harmony of the whole circle of divine truths, and she cordially embraced them. In his church she first saw, and at once appreciated the immense value of a Sabbath school, then a novelty in the land. She learned the value of social prayer. As she thought of Home, the view of the objects and duties of life at once changed. She knew there were a few Christians, who felt as she now did. But only one of them moved in her own circle, and she was in the decline of life. Ellen had never talked with her. But it seemed *so easy* to convince enlightened people, like those of Home, of the value of her new hopes and plans, that she could not expect to be opposed. And there was one drop of sweetness in her cup. Would she not now be a fitter companion, a better pastor's wife for her betrothed? Then came the alarming question, whether he, the chosen, worshipped one, shared in such feelings? He had never spoken of them. But *love* had been their theme; and that was the reason. At any rate, she would

know very soon. She could not *write* to him, on such a subject. No, the first hours of their joyful meeting should be devoted to the topic. Surely he *must* love the Saviour, whose love it was his business to preach.

Autumn drew near. Ellen returned to Home, and began at once, in the fulness of her soul, to tell of her Saviour. She could not now be blind to the spiritual state of her friends. All loved her, and few, therefore, to her face, treated her efforts with any want of respect. The parson, and a few others, affected to regard it as a mere change in the intellectual views of religion, induced by an eloquent and gifted preacher. Some would try to reason her out of these "strange ways," as they called them. Some opposed her with earnestness, with bitter feelings. A few scoffed. But her arguments and her meekness soon quelled that. A small number listened with deep interest, and received instruction and profit. The old disciples rejoiced and thanked God that one so beloved and fitted for wide usefulness was added to their number. In a few months she announced her plan of a Sabbath school for children. If her conversation had excited emotion, and, with the worldly, suspicions of her sanity, this confirmed them. The great *idea* of training the young



for Christ, was practically lost in Home. Such a thing as a pious child was unknown. Children and young people, every body said, went to heaven as a matter of course. What need of any change in them? What need of a religious school for them? Could they not learn to read the Bible at home? Religion was for the mature mind, not for infancy!—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, Thou hast perfected praise." Our Saviour's words had no example in Home to illustrate its meaning, for ages. Its meaning was unknown, as far as it referred to this world.

We little ones wondered, as well as our elders, what this same Sabbath school might mean. But we all knew Miss Ellen; and an eager crowd gathered in the school-house on a bright sunny Sabbath, after the close of the public services of the sanctuary. There were not five of us all who had ever heard any one pray, but the ministers in the pulpit. Only two in the vicinage maintained family worship. Not a few parents, too, had come with their children to see the strange thing. And when Miss Ellen, with her gentle voice trembling with emotion, began to speak to us of prayer, a gaze of eager curiosity was fixed on her. She knelt before us, none following her example, and began, in melting accents, to invoke the presence



of the Holy Spirit. It was strange, crazy, indeed,—so ran popular feeling—for a woman to pray so publicly. Who ever heard of such a thing? But there were some who rejoiced at it.

It was truly a Primitive Sunday School! No Sabbath School Libraries were then in being. No Societies to create them existed. Juvenile literature was very limited. There was none of it in all Home of more value than “Goody Two Shoes,” and similar stories. No “Question Books” nor Bible Dictionaries existed for Sunday schools. So Miss Ellen taught us to recite Watts’ hymns, and whole chapters of the Bible. They who recited most and best, received rewards, such as the teacher of the week day-school gave us. Those who learned the most during the season, were to have a New Testament. Then she sung with us, and sometimes explained the Scriptures we recited, or exhorted us to love the Saviour. It was “harmless,” people said, though they “could see no good to come of it.” Good? There was in it all the elements of the regeneration of the town! It revived in men’s minds the *idea* that the young needed a Saviour. It was a lesson on the need of a new heart, that impressed the most thoughtless. True, the means were not so adapted to awaken thought and lead the heart of a child to Christ,

as those our Sabbath school children now enjoy. But the lesson was never lost in Home, on the community, or on those children. Of all that youthful group, hardly one now lives a prayerless life! Widely scattered over the world, almost every living one is a living Christian. Some have already entered the Permanent Life before us, leaving behind them the evidences of their genuine faith and holy love. True, other agencies have led them to Christ; but here the seeds of life were sown. The only immediate result of the school, was the recalling to men's minds the principles before adverted to. But that was a great stride towards a revival of a pure faith. It did not fail to call forth opposition. And, before the summer closed, it was an *understood thing* that "Miss Ellen C. was crazy." Poor Ellen! the storm was indeed near!

### III. *The cloud.*

"Ellen C. has run off! Get up quick! All the neighbors are out in search of her. She took no clothes that they can find, and, if she is not found before night, she will perish in the cold." Such was the startling cry that roused us, before daylight, one of the coldest March mornings I ever knew. The snow still covered the ground. The

night had been cold and frosty. Clouds hung over the eastern sky, and everything boded a cold storm of sleet and rain, if not a fall of snow. A few hours of such weather must destroy the life of a delicate woman, without much clothing, and who had no reason to guide her feeble steps. The day was one of intense anxiety. More than a hundred men searched the barns, fields and woods for miles around. No trace of her was to be found. It began to be suspected that suicide had closed her career.

Ellen was indeed insane. What had broken down that glorious intellect ?

Little did she think what keen reproaches, what taunts, what scorn, what alienations of friends, and malice of foes, would follow her efforts to win the young and old to Christ. But, hard as the struggle was, all this could be borne, for Christ was honored. He had suffered, and his followers must.

But there were pangs in store for her, she had never looked for. He, the loved one, the idolized, treated her new hopes and joys as enthusiastic folly, or worse ! And, worse than all, it began to be whispered that the wine cup was so often in his hands, that honor and reputation would soon be lost, if it was not already. The heart's wor-

shipped one, proved unworthy! Love leaned on a broken reed that pierced its heart. The shock was too great for such a passionate nature. Had that nature, from infancy, been subjected to the control of the gospel, it might have withstood it; but now, after days and nights of sleepless anguish, the glorious intellect gave way. Reason was unstrung, and Ellen became a maniac! The resources of the healing art were employed in vain; reason would not come back at their bidding. Who did not mourn that so dark a cloud had passed over her life? Some of the enemies of her holy faith said, that "it was just what they had expected from her new notions of religion." But there were candid men who saw further, or knew better. And now she had left her dwelling in the night time.

Hundreds of willing hearts had gathered, before dawn, from a wide region of country, with lanterns and rakes. The river margin was minutely examined, and no trace of her discovered. Parts of it were dragged. The ponds were still closed with ice, save one; but no discovery was made there.

Dividing into groups, as day broke, they determined to leave no square rod of ground unexplored. Happily the weather was somewhat

warmer, though it was almost freezing. Few looked to see Ellen alive. The woods, fields, fences, barns, houses, swamps, all were explored again and again. About noon, one thought he saw something white moving in a clump of bushes he had just passed. Turning again, poor Ellen was found, in her night dress, almost exhausted. She had wandered about for hours, and at last laid down in the shallow water in which the bushes grew, and tried, she said, to drink herself to death, when she found them too shallow to drown her. She was tenderly conveyed to her home again. Little evil resulted from the exposure, but no good. To this day she is the same. Her mania is generally of a quiet, harmless sort. Sometimes she is some great one : a king, a mighty conqueror. Her favorite fancy is, that she is *Christ*. With looks of dignity and kindness she will demand the homage due to her as the Saviour. Often she will suffer herself to be reasoned out of her fancies ; and then her conversation is both spiritual and instructive. In the common affairs of life it is not seen, save in the indifference to them all. Like many other insane persons, no one ever heard Ellen allude to her early sorrows. Even now, Christians love to visit her. Holy love to her Saviour and to all who bear his image,

so fills her heart, that none can doubt the reality of her religious affections. Insane, the intellect may be; but conscience will not suffer men to say that such holy affections are insane. They know they are right and rational. The power of the uncontrolled human affections may unseat reason; but none can doubt that the love of God rules in the heart. Education for the intellect only, does not diminish the amount of crime or insanity. There's not an affection of our nature but requires more care and nurture, often more restraint, than any power of the intellect. Religious influence in early youth, is the only power that can so educate the heart. When Sabbath schools and parental fidelity have fully done their office, we shall need no insane hospitals, no prisons. "The child shall be a hundred years old," because its tender spirit shall be taught by the Holy Spirit, and formed into the divine model of holy purity, intelligence and love.

## CHAPTER IX.

The mission sermons—Givers not losers—Weakness made strong; folly, wise—The dream—The poor widow—The learned taught humility—The sailor preacher—The heart, the best controversialist—New sects arise when needed—The sons of Home, abroad—The natural heart shown.

PERHAPS, on earth, the bright intellect of Ellen C. will never awaken to a distinct perception of the results of her labors and prayers. But in the Spirit land, where the mind sees all effects and knows all the causes of human action, will not her soul rejoice?

Sabbath schools were not again resumed in Home for many years; but the power of that humble effort was never forgotten.

In pursuing the detail of causes of revived faith, I shall dwell most on those which relate to principles of action, not the mere detail of events.

The work of missions to the heathen, that thrice blessed labor of holy zeal, commenced before the separation between the friends and foes of the Pilgrim faith was complete. In all classes, many opposed the plan, at first. But many others were



interested, for a time, even from the novelty of the thing. Missions to the heathen ! Since Mayhew's time the churches had not heard of such a thing. Neither, in the Protestant world, had the idea been acted on, by system, in any country, till a recent date. One of the first missionaries sent forth by our churches, visited Home, and laid before the people the objects of his mission. Some knew it was an "orthodox" movement, and that it called for their money. A covetous rich man declared he would give nothing. A rich church-member left her money at home, for she "would not encourage beggars." The plain, faithful preaching, and the picture of the state of the heathen world lying in wickedness affected many hearts unused to such emotions. The covetous man gave liberally, and the lady borrowed, that she might do so likewise. It was the first time, for ages, that the churches at Home had been called on, as Christians, to act out the spirit of benevolence to the guilty ! There was not much piety left. The appeal was novel ; the topics new ; the sympathies awakened, more than the conscience. But the result was creditable to their liberality. It tended to establish again in the minds of men, the idea of duty towards sinful men. The giver is doubly blessed. His sympathies will follow his gifts. This enlarges his affections, and



his mind also. It tends to prepare his mind for divine influences for his own salvation. So that the maxim, "there is that giveth, and yet increaseth," is based on a law of our nature. It is part of our spirit—and nature too. And if I had no other object in training my children to liberal habits, I would do it as a means of preparing them to receive and be benefited in the highest degree by the grace of the gospel. And I have remarked, that of those who were most deeply interested, on that occasion, quite a number have since become God's children. It is not that divine grace is bestowed as a reward for beneficent acts but because such acts break down the bulwarks of our selfish nature, and prepare the soul, pursuant to its own laws, to receive the truth in the love of it. There is no doubly fortified wall of selfish habits to oppose the claims of a gospel whose essence is self-denying love, or benevolence in heart and life. "He that watereth shall also himself be watered," expresses the same law of our nature. So has God written on man's nature every principle of his law. And there is not an element in our nature but is set at naught by a life of sin. If the churches can be induced to give, to the point of real sacrifice, a manifest increase of holiness and blessing will therefore follow,

by the same law. On the other hand, "there is that withholdeth more than is meet; but it tendeth to poverty." It makes God frown, because it is cherishing selfish feelings. Selfish feelings contract and impair the vigor of the mental powers, both by their direct influence, and by removing the highest motives and incitements to mental action; and also by excluding from the mind the most ennobling thoughts on a vast variety of topics. These alone would educate and invigorate the mind.

An eminent living statesman is accustomed to prepare himself for any great intellectual effort by the reading of the Psalms, Prophets, Epistles and other portions of the Bible. It is not to borrow thoughts; for they often contain nothing germane to his intended labor. But he finds it gives more vigor to his mind, more clearness and justness to his views than all other modes of training. Often have I found the effect of prayer—by which the intellect was brought under the same class of spiritual influences that flow from the Bible—strengthen the memory, guide the wavering judgment aright, and add force, dignity and beauty to efforts from which I have before drawn back, as tasks beyond the reach of my powers. So Luther reasoned, in his maxim, "To have prayed well is to have studied well."

By the same law, right action aids in the in-

vestigation of truth, "He that doeth his will, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." The marked and beneficent spiritual changes in sects of errorists that have warmly enlisted in temperance, anti-slavery, moral reform, and other labors of Christian benevolence is noticed, even by themselves. Their bitterness against the pure faith and those who love it ceases. Acting on its principles, they gradually assimilate their belief to it. They often think the change is in others; but it is in their own hearts, and results from the operation of the law of benevolence.

"Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor." What meant the precept, and its promise, "and thou shalt have treasure in heaven?" The same law explains it. It did not promise heaven as a reward for an act of self-denial; but such acts tend most powerfully to secure the possession of right affections towards God and man. It is by the same law that beneficent action in states and communities prepares men's hearts for a general diffusion of spiritual blessings. But to return.

The influence of several pious school-teachers, from abroad, was a great blessing in Home. Their prayers, their lives taught the young to respect piety. Their intelligence reunited, in older minds, the association between piety and know-

ledge. Those who once looked on spiritual religion as a weakness, could no longer do so. Observation showed, too, that the intellectual growth of the young mind under such teachers, was more rapid, was more healthful. So strongly is this often felt, that I have known infidels take great pains to secure pious teachers in schools placed under their control. The power of the gospel is hidden from their own hearts, but they see its beneficial results, and desire to enjoy them.

Who does not admire the condescension of God to human weakness ; his pity for man's folly and guilt ! Men's weaknesses, errors and sins are often made the means of recalling themselves or others to the path of life. Such instances have not been wanting in Home.

A young and lovely woman, from the very humblest class of society, extremely ignorant, though not without good powers of mind, was early married, and removed to a distant State. There, under the influence of a revival in the Methodist body, she became the subject of Divine grace. Widowed and childless, she returned to her native town. She brought with her poverty, so far as this world's goods went, but a rich heart, for God and his Son made it their dwelling. Who could doubt it, who saw her holy living, and listen-

ed to her conversation? There was only one other Christian in the neighborhood, a lady in much higher station ; but they became almost inseparable friends. The great Lord of life was the chiefest among ten thousands to each, and they saw him in each other. It was a dark neighborhood ; and her old associates, her near neighbors, all with whom she was most likely to come in contact, were of the class I have before spoken of ; illiterate, neglecters of the Bible and of public worship.

Ardent in feeling, she convinced them all of her *sincerity*,—a great point gained. One of the most useful living ministers, one who lays no claim to profound scholarship or eminent talents, when I asked the secret of his usefulness, especially to the educated, a class for whose benefit I always thought his labors poorly adapted, replied, “ I know not, unless it is, that they all have a deep conviction that I am *sincere*,” or hearty, in the work. It is not merely to be in earnest, or zealous, or eloquent ; but to make men feel that there is a singleness of purpose that looks alone to the good of their souls. That is the sincerity my excellent and honored friend intended. “ I seek not yours, but you,” was equally the lesson of the widow’s life.

Then, she was not very refined ; she was not *above* them, but one of their own sort of folks.

They could talk to her freely ! Nay, they could out-argue her, sometimes, if they could not prove that her manifest holiness was a fancy ; *that* they did not try ! Then the widow was *credulous*, in some matters, to an extreme. Endowed with a fund of common sense, in the affairs of life, she yet was full of dreams and visions of both earthly and heavenly things.

It is in vain to reason a large portion of even educated persons out of their faith in dreams. Call it credulity, or what you will, there is a fascination about these visions of the night few can wholly resist. So it is with " signs," both of events in the natural and social and spiritual worlds. No strength of philosophical intellect, no treasures of learning, no sceptical habits of mind, no want of natural *reverence*, frees the mind wholly from this influence. And many *will think* that the mind, shut out from the fetters of sense, has glimpses of the future, and of the spirit world which are not accorded to our waking hours. It may all be delusion, but it is one that is only refined, not banished, by increasing knowledge. Among the illiterate such ideas are nearly universal. They also connect them with religion also. And the representations of the Scripture that such things *have been*, leads them to attach a value to our dreams far beyond their intrinsic interest.

With the philosophy of dreams—with *all* philosophies of dreaming!—I have long been familiar. They have little real philosophy in them! Why undertake to explain the action of mind without a body? (For this is clearly essential to any full exposition of it). Idle as most dreams are, their influence over the life is sometimes very great. “He that hath a dream, let him tell a dream.” In my childhood, when about seven years old, I dreamed I was dead and in hell! It seemed not unlike the scenery of our world. Its devil, not unlike a smiling man! He offered to the lost, beautiful and fragrant fruits, that turned to bitter ashes in the mouth; and still he smiled! There seemed no restraint on men’s motions, or intercourse. Their sufferings were in their hearts. Full of anguish at being shut up with the wicked, I approached the low wall that seemed to divide the place from heaven! Child as I was, I could see over it; but had no power to climb it. It seemed as if the help must come from the heavenly side. I looked around for it. Presently, the forms of my venerable grand-parents seemed to pass by, mingled with throngs of happy faces. I called for help. They only looked at me mournfully, and passed on. I could not blame or envy them. “*It is right, it is just,*” was the feeling irresistibly impressed on my mind. For the first



time in my life, I knelt, and tried to pray, *not* to be saved from hell ; for it never had, in all my life, any terror to my mind ; but to be reserved from such a *just* punishment. The habit of secret prayer then formed, was never wholly lost, through long years of youthful folly and sin, till I united with Yale College church, in 1831. I attach no value to dreams. For years, when in health, I have had none. I listen impatiently to the recital of them. Still the most permanent influence that has acted on my life, perhaps, was this dream of early childhood !

I wonder not at their power over minds naturally credulous, and also devout. No doubt the widow's visions and semi-prophecies, which always boded blessings, tended very greatly to secure to her faith its proper influence over a large class of minds. To them, it was the poetry and romance of religion. They who are insensible to such influences, and laugh at them when they appear in the grosser forms of dreams and trances, should never read *Paradise Lost*, or the *Faery Queen* ! The widow had strong faith in the power of prayer. She was sure that God would answer her. Nay, in a vision He had shown her that He was soon to revive his work of grace in Home. Had she not seen in a dream, a *great light* flaming up, in the direction of the



dwelling of a rich family ; and then little lights also, at intervals, all over the town ? People smiled at her “ silly fancies,” but they had a good influence, still ! And her tender appeals to the heart were, in connection with her holy living, the means of leading several, in her own class, to love the Saviour. What a feast it was, when *five* women, in that one neighborhood, could meet and talk and sing and pray to the Saviour they loved ! There was not such another place in all the town. Some set it all down as the dreams of silly women : but others sighed and wished *they* could share the same joys and hopes, if it was only in their dreams !

In another circle, equally ignorant, perhaps more so, in a distant corner of the town, a like influence was exerted by a poor despised man, who had been brought to Christ by the preaching of a Baptist pastor, in a distant place where he sought work. His prayers, and those of a few others gathered around him, resulted in the end, in the formation of a Baptist church.

There is far too little sympathy between the educated and the ignorant. When men learn that God endows them with knowledge only that they may do more to benefit their fellows, they will not be “ puffed up” nor disgust their less favored brethren by their pride in their superior intelligence.

Education and learning have little moral value if they do not teach us to be "clothed with humility," to be meek, gentle, patient, especially with the poor and obscure, the ignorant and the weak. The pastors of Home were ever men of learning; but they had alienated the poor and the ignorant from God's house by their neglect, by their pride, by their want of sympathy. The poor, no longer had the gospel preached to them, to any great extent. The deep rooted prejudices such classes entertain against educated ministers, who does not know? The man of learning can overcome them, if he will. His knowledge was given him, in trust, for their good. They know their claims upon it. But they have as much pride as the man of learning, and do not like to see the *airs* of the teacher put on! They want its results, and will joyfully receive them from one whose meekness arrogates no superiority, and whose justice and true benevolence sees in every man a brother, and a child of the same Father. In this should the man of education learn to be a child; while in understanding he is a *man*.

Too many of those who preach a purer faith, practically despise the poor. They are *clannish*; they love and seek educated society. They forget, insensibly, the claims of the ignorant and the poor. The Literary Soiree is a source of high en-

joyment; and for this they forego the far richer pleasure of imparting their stores to those who lack. This is the true source of the prejudices of masses of men against education in the pastor and in other professional men. And, in reference to these prejudices, I have often thought, that the popular lectures on the sciences by our literary men were, in fact, a most effective preaching of the gospel!

It is no reproach, *now*, to the ministry of the Baptist and Methodist bodies, to say, that a large portion of their predecessors were extremely illiterate, and themselves in many cases, filled with prejudices against learning in the ministry. But that very circumstance, combined with their encouragement of "visions," "trances," "dreams," and like excesses, with their warm piety and love of souls, won them popular favor with the neglected and ignorant classes. When one, now among the most eloquent men of our time, began his career, in a back school-house in Home, it is said he could not read. But one could hear him preach for a mile! He "cried aloud," indeed, and "spared not" his lungs or men's ears! He was visionary, though pious; ignorant, though sincere; "God gave him all," he said, "for no man had ever lar'nt him," or "torched him!" It was very true, so far as the affections of his

heart, and his yearning, longing desire to save souls were concerned. He knew little, but he felt much. He spoke, like a thunder clap, when a gentle whisper was enough; but the words he uttered in loudest tones were, "sin," "death," "judgment," "Christ and the cross." His own feelings suited well the prejudices of his hearers. They knew as much or more than he, of every thing save "the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost." And God helped him to teach some of them that divine lesson. Known, now, all over our own, and in other lands, praised in the Senate house, for his usefulness, he can still throw the arm of a brother round the neck of a diseased and guilty sailor, and ask his brother to go with him to the Saviour for healing and pardon, with the same simple zeal he showed in Home, long years ago. Neither his voice nor his words are forgotten there.

The pastors of Home, while they gave men no ideas of the real nature of the faith of our fathers, succeeded in filling them with prejudices against the words employed to express some of the offensive doctrines of the cross; doctrines essential to a matured and intelligent piety, though not, with most minds, to its existence, or its joys. I speak of the great principles of the divine government over men, including all that is embraced in the idea

of God's sovereign dominion. The humble, cordial, entire, unlimited submission of all our hopes, fears, joys and wishes to the Divine Will, must be in some form secure. It is, though by a great diversity of means. The Methodist body, in proportion to the intelligence and real holiness of its members see it, though they are opposed to some of those Scriptural doctrines that, in the higher class of reasoning minds, are connected with such submission, as cause with effect. But their very hostility to these views gave them favor with many men, to whom, after conciliating their prejudices on these and other points, they preached the glory of the atoning Saviour, as a deliverer from sin. I have no doubt they have won many thousands to Christ, thus. And when the Holy Spirit does *this* blessed work, in filling the heart with the love of God, the same elements of faith, submission, humility, meekness, zeal, brotherly kindness and charity, will in the end, always appear, however diverse and imperfect the teachings may be to the intellect. And truly spiritual men differ far less than they sometimes think, in respect to all the doctrines that enter into the elements of a Christian life. There are some men, *many* minds, by their very constitution, limited to the "first principles of the faith. For others, in order to attain

perfection and ripeness of character, other doctrines are needed. And the Bible has its "heights and depths" for some, as well as its glorious but simple truths for others. But it has often delighted me to see how truths *intellectually* rejected, entered in fact, deeply into the Christian experience of those who denied them. The logical statement of the idea was rejected, but the grace of the Holy Spirit had given power to the principle, in the heart. It early taught me a lesson respecting controversy with real Christians. We can agree, and make prayers towards unity in the faith, just *so long as we reason to, and from the heart*, and that heart is enriched with the teachings of the blessed Spirit. Reverse the process, and every step commonly widens our differences, and produces bitter feelings among those who should love as brethren. Every sect, as holiness increases, learn to place a higher value on an educated ministry. But if, when they have obtained it, they pervert the blessing, become "puffed up," and neglect to minister to the ignorant, the weak, the poor, and suffer them to be alienated from their hearts, God will raise up other sects, who will be fitted to meet even the prejudices of the ignorant, and who have humility enough to "condescend to men of low estate." The new sect may differ from the old, in some even important doctrine of the Bible. But so long



as they hold fast the cross of Christ, God will use their labors to raise up many sons and daughters for glory, who otherwise might have perished in sin. He "will have all men come unto him." And when one sect neglect any part of His vineyard, He shows the pity and tenderness of His Divine heart by sending others who shall teach those who err, and guide them to the Lamb.

I said that for a generation, the young and enterprising were drawn away from Home to other places.—God, the God of our fathers ordered this, in mercy to the posterity of his covenant keeping children. It is a remarkable fact, that of all the scores who thus left their native soil, God, in a few years, brought nearly all back to the faith of their fathers, both in intellect and in heart. True, in some instances, this was easily traced to the power of a spiritual religion in the places of their new abode. But in the most cases, it was not so. In one town where the darkness was dense as that of Home, in its darkest hours, God raised up a church eminently spiritual and intelligent, planted on the faith of the fathers, and composed almost entirely of the sons and daughters of Home. In many and distant States, often under the worst influences, the Spirit sought them out, and led their feet to the Rock, and that Rock was the Christ their fathers loved. He is one that "keepeth his covenant."

One was a preacher of error, surrounded by a rich church who loved him ; far away from Home. But he was near to the heart of our fathers' God. And, in the pride of his intellect, and strength of his love for error, his heart was bowed before the cross of the Saviour, whose power and glory he denied. Another, eager for gain, in the marts of a crowded city, was taught to get gain richer than the most fine gold. Another, where " storm was upon the midnight waters" far from the land and from the influences of the gospel, was led by His hand who guides the storm, to rest on the same Saviour. Did they cease to love their birth-place, when Divine love filled their hearts ? Their letters, their visits, their prayers will answer. They warned, they reasoned, they prayed, and with tears often besought the old friends of their youth to be reconciled to God. And it was not in vain. Though the prophet is less honored in his own country, sometimes, yet in other cases he finds willing hearts, that, for love's sake will receive his message. The more instances of such conversion occurred, and the oftener these loved ones returned, the more the gospel became associated, in men's minds, with all the tender, human affections of our nature. And this is always a great point gained. The power of sympathy can then act, in subduing the pride of



the heart, and recalling the erring intellect to the faith of the fathers. It is difficult to exert a direct influence for Christ over our family relations. They know our faults so well, and we are so conscious that they do, that we are reluctant to address them with the fidelity we can freely use with strangers. But if we truly live for Christ, and our sincere devotion is manifest, not all our known foibles and sins will prevent the voice of affection from reaching the heart. True, a man's foes sometimes are found in his own household. Some are embittered against the gospel in proportion as they become acquainted with its nature. Perhaps the most bitter enemy of the gospel in all Home, is one of those, who for many years has most clearly understood its principles; nay, had much to do, in earlier days, with its revival. The love of sin in the heart will not always yield to the voice of conscience or an enlightened judgment. So our Lord teaches when he tells unbelievers, "Now ye have both *seen* and *hated* both me and my Father." The very preaching of its truths leads some sinners to embrace their opposite errors. And the manifestations of the power of grace in some hearts, are accompanied by a more bitter hostility in the hearts of those who refuse to have Christ reign over them. The proud, the vain, the lover of pleasure, the man ambitious of worldly honor, as well as the openly

vicious, will show the enmity of their hearts against the Holy one, when the gospel disturbs their self-complacency ; they will resist its claims till the power of the Spirit softens their hearts, convinces them of their sinful nature and life, and leads them to rejoice in Christ, their Saviour.

How flamed the enmity to the gospel, in many hearts in Home, when at last, the truly pious, encouraged by their increasing numbers, established Sabbath worship, and employed pastors once more, like in faith and holiness, to those whose ministry our fathers loved ! “ The town would be impoverished by so many churches.” The valuations show a large increase of wealth ! “ These people will come to poverty, by paying so much to new teachers and churches, and other new objects.” The pious have rapidly and steadily increased in wealth, in almost every instance ! “ They mean to say *we* are not Christians.” Ah, there spake the guilty conscience, awakening from the sleep of ages, and seeing Christ afar off ! The gospel was no longer to be veiled from men’s understandings, though they were still free to reject the reign of holy love over their hearts. Grace has a “constraining” but no compulsory power over man. God worketh in us, both to will and to do his pleasure, but never forces one heart into his service. The Christian convert says, “ *I rejoice* to do thy will, O God !”

## CHAPTER X.

## PHYSIC FOR A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

I. *The wedding.*

IT was an old family mansion, built when timber was plenty and boards cheap! The very garret contained more square feet than a modern built cottage orneè. The high spacious rooms, painted in landscape, furnished with heavy, old, rich carved furniture spoke of wealth and ancestral taste. The yellow paint was something faded; but the twining honeysuckle and jasmine added a far richer ornament, reaching to the very roof tree, and half shading the windows. The very offices round the dwelling look like plenty. The barns—long ranges of building—are filled with hay and grain; and the hired man is just driving into the yard a herd of cattle and sheep that a Patriarch might not despise for numbers or beauty. Between the barn and corn-house you can just get a glimpse, over the hill tops, of the rich hickory woods that furnish that noble wood-pile, with its two years' supply of seasoned wood in advance, that looks provident

for human comfort. The dwellers here need fear no fierce wintry storm ! Look, where the sun is just setting in a blaze of glory, that perfectly dazzles you ! Shade your eyes, and get a view of that noble orchard of every variety of fruit, and the garden and shrubbery, close at your feet. No want of fruit or pulse for the well furnished table, or cider richer than wine for the cellar. Just now the laborers are gathering the last winter apples. Count up the barrels. One, two, twenty, eighty, two hundred barrels ! Why there's fruit enough for all Home. Doubtless there is a greater variety stored and preserved. For you may see round the garden rows of quince trees, plumbs, apricots, pears, currants, raspberries, and every other delicious thing our cold climate will nourish. And there is even a green-house, yonder, half hidden under the hill-side, for exotic flowers and fruits, and to supply early vegetables for the table.

Then in front, and round the dwelling, see how rich the green turf is, spotted over with rose bushes and lilacs. But lift up your eyes a little. See the successive terraces, faced with hewn stone, rough hewn, for ornament ; and loaded with every flower that will bloom in Autumn. You see the roots of many a spring and summer beauty have been carried to the hot house. Here is taste presiding

over wealth. Raise your eyes again, and follow my hand ! Do you see that green spot, to the east, under that hill, where the horses are drinking ? There is the spring. Now trace the little stream down hitherwards, through the pasture, by the line of verdure. It crosses the road in a broad sheet of clear, sparkling water. There is a load of guests, coming to the bridal, driving over the rustic bridge. Who are they, I wonder ? No matter ; the rich and happy have many friends. The brook passes so close to the terrace wall that we must go to it, to see the pickerel and trout disporting in its hollows. Mark how it winds away to the south, through that broad rich meadow, till it is lost in the woods, almost a mile off. Follow the high road, in the same direction, and count the houses, of every form, size and fashion. There you can see the oldest house in town ! Just over it you see the high steeple of our church. Some people do say, that it is a pity the vane is so near to heaven, and the people's hearts so far off ! But come ! I see the guests are going into the parlor, the parson must have come while we have been gazing on the bride's rich farm and fine prospects.

There stands the young bride, the owner of the old mansion and its rich grounds. She is clad in simple white. Why should she be ornamented ?

Every one knows she is rich. She is rather short—no fault, in my eye. Her form is round, a little *too* full ; but never mind it. Her long hair curls in the neck. There's a single rose bud, half blown, stuck in the golden clasp of her girdle, and another half hidden in that ringlet over the left brow. Her blue eyes, that commonly lack expression, are surely beautiful now ! She is speaking to *his* sister ; that accounts for it. The expression is mild ; but the slight move of the lip and nostril speak of decision. That round forehead, and head drawn back, tell of pride as well as power. The smile is too stately for *me* ; but I am not the lover ; only his cousin, which makes all the odds in the world. See that rich library ? There are many things which the elegant literature of our own and other lands and tongues can supply. It is most of it a bridal present. I wish there was more of religion, less of taste, there. There is, to be sure, Blair, beside of Byron ; Lathrop's Sermons, stuck between two volumes of Rosseau's Emiliê ; but they are not much, that is, not so very much better. So, it is literature without religion. How old is the bride ? Just twenty-four, to-day.

The bridegroom is not tall, but certainly the most elegant man in the room, tho' the parson *does* feel so proud of his stately form ! He must be

about twenty-six. I don't quite like his eye; it is too sensual. But his fine features are manly. They say he was wild in college. Nay, that he was carried to his room intoxicated, commencement night. But he has studied law, since, and it is to be hoped he learned the laws of temperance. His old, rich family, honored for generations, would not suffer him to marry this heiress if he was not correct in his habits. I *don't* like to see so much infidel literature in that book case. If he must have the *Henriade*, he might have left out the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, so called, because there's no philosophy in it! But how happy James looks! I did not think, when I laughed with him, last spring, about the heiress, that they would be united so soon, if ever. But he has gained his *first cause*, and I do not believe he will care to plead another!

The solemn words of blessing were uttered. There was stillness, some tears, then kisses, congratulations, feasting, the sparkling goblet, mirth, wit and song, till the guests retired to their homes.

## II. *The funeral.*

Two years later the same guests were again assembled, clothed in the garments of woe. There was a crowd in and around the dwelling, filling every room and the whole yard. There was an



expression of pity and pain, rather than sorrow, on almost every face. Look back a little. James was by birth, education, professional attainments, mental gifts and wealth, justly entitled to rank with the first young men of his time. The pet son, he had been too much indulged. The college bills were large; but so were his father's before him. There were too many "wines" and "suppers," by far, for entire sobriety; but he graduated with honor. Young men *would* be wild, a little; so his father said, and the whole family agreed. His profession was only to give him some gentlemanly calling. There was no lack of wealth. Besides political eminence was what he aspired to, and what his friends wished. Now married into an old and wealthy family, with popular talents, pleasing manners, education, leisure, and many friends, what might he not hope for?

The friends and the bride knew not that the habits of intemperance were already formed; that the eye was often brilliant with the excitement of champaign, and the song inspired by incipient delirium. We little thought of such things, then, in the days of darkness. Fond of elegant literature were the whole family circle. The bridal months passed away brilliantly, happily. The cloud in the distance was not noted. In the open-



ing spring, he must become the gentleman farmer. He must work with his laborers, or pretend to, and drink with them. By autumn he was often *drunk* with them ! By another year, his only associates were low, drunken laborers, intoxicated in the field before noon, every day. The farm was neglected, money wasted, friends lost, bad passions roused, oaths common, brutality towards all but his wife, frequent, and *hope* of reform gone ! Who shall tell how the young, childless woman mourned over her lost visions of bliss ? How she sought refuge from trouble in literary pursuits, in music, in song, in social visits ! How her pale cheek and passionless eye told of a breaking heart ! Had one word of unkindness ever fallen from *him*, it would have broken ! So he died, as the fool dieth, and we all came to mourn with the living, and to bury the loathsome body out of her sight. There was no consolation for her, in the character of the departed ; the healing power of the gospel she knew not. The pastor, in his prayer, said that time soothed our sorrows, and the offices of friendship. So why speak of the gospel ! So we buried him, and left the young widow alone to weep.

### III. *The brother's letter.*

“ Dearest G.—My beloved and most cherished

sister, my heart is deeply wounded by the news of your affliction. If my love, my tears, my very life could give you consolation, you know they should be yours. I will not, I must not, speak of him you have lost. I do mourn over his untimely grave ; but, my sister, I mourn far more for you ! You have no comforter ! You would not hear me, in the hours of joy. Your heart ached with the excess of your happiness, present and in near prospect. You said you admired the divine beneficence, and were grateful for every blessing ; you loved the Giver ! Ah sister, your love and gratitude were only the reflection of your own happiness. Everything smiled on you, and your smiles answered again. You were offended when I told you that your heart was far from God, and was lifted up with sinful pride. You almost denied that I loved you, or appreciated your character. Am I not right, sister ? Did I not see in you the picture of my own nature, softened as woman's form is, but still the same ? When I preached the wiles of error, and believed in the native purity of my proud heart, was I not just so deceived myself ? I thought I loved God ; but he was not in all my thoughts, in the real holiness of his character. My proud heart was not subdued to his sovereign will. May I read your heart, dearest

G. ? Has affliction, so sharp, so severe, so overwhelming, prepared you to see what is passing within ? You weep all day, and refuse to be comforted. The words of sympathy seem to be mockery. At night you sleep only from exhaustion. In the morning you ask, ‘ Why is my lot so much more bitter than that of others ? ’ In the evening you say, ‘ I surely have not deserved it. What sin have I committed, that God should be so severe ? Is this his goodness that smiled so serenely upon me ? I expected sorrow and death at some time ; but not to have the hopes of my youth so blasted. How have I deserved, not suffering only, but this shame ? ’ Do I read you right, G. ? Is not this the voice of your heart ? And, in the stillness of the night, does no voice add, ‘ your heart is not right in the sight of the Holy One ? ’ Three months have now passed away, since that sad day ; and you write me you have no comforter still. Suffer one who loves you with both a brother’s and a father’s tenderness, to probe your heart, before I point you to that only Comforter I know. You find your loved music has lost its soothing power ; *he* used to sing with you. Did you ever ‘ make melody in your heart, unto the Lord ? ’ Did you ever sing to His praise, with devout affections ?

You loved literature. But what was it ? Did it

tell aught of God, his holy law, the evil of sin, the coming judgment, the cross of a Redeemer's mercy and agony, the life beyond the dark valley? Was not every book of this nature omitted or unread? You read the Bible at times, I know. But did you make it the guide of your life? Did you ever try to regulate your affections and your thoughts by its holy precepts? Did you ever seriously try to *please God*, for one entire week, or even day of your life? I know you united with the church, on your marriage. But did you really feel that you were consecrating your heart to Christ? That you were, thenceforth, to 'walk in newness of life?' I know you have sometimes prayed; but did you ever really delight in the presence of the Holy God? Or was it an irksome thought that he read your heart, and knew your very thoughts before they were your own? You say you find no pleasure in your former literary pursuits, because they so constantly remind you of past joys and present sufferings. But if you really regarded your Maker as having a *right* to dispose of you, would you so murmur? Is he not holy? Is he not perfect in wisdom? Is he not always just? (I ask your conscience and your understanding; do not let your heart answer for them). Does he ever willingly afflict or grieve the children of men? Must there not be in your own character,

ample reasons to justify all these judgments of his hand? I know the innocent, the righteous sometimes suffer. I know you are free from outward stain, and grosser passions. But are you *holy*?

Three years ago, you made choice of your companion. Which was dearest to your heart, he, or your God? Did you not feel that you were strong, your life of joy secure beyond doubt or change? Was not your heart lifted up with pride? Was you *humble* in the day of your prosperity? Ah, do I not know my sister's heart from my own? Have we not had, from infancy, the same joys, sorrows, books, favorite topics of thought, views of men, of society, and of '*our place*' in it? Did you not think it a strange thing, five years ago, to have your *proud* brother commend humility, meekness, and forgiveness of injuries? Did not my sister ask me, 'if I would be coward enough to submit to insult?' Did not you say that such a religion you could not respect? Was not that the heart of *pride*? 'God resisteth the proud; he knoweth their thoughts afar off; but he giveth grace to the humble.'

You say you shrink even from the society of dear friends. Is not this the fruit of your mortified pride? Dearest sister, I weep over your sorrows. But I cannot alleviate them by suggesting any aliment for a sinful heart. I see in all your

excessive sorrow, only the fruits of a proud, selfish, passionate, unrenewed heart, just such as mine was when we wept together by our dying mother's bedside. Have you forgotten my passionate grief? Did I not murmur against the Holy One? I love all that circle of friends around you. There is not one of them but I connect some early joy with their forms and voices. But does one of them all speak to you of the sinful heart, and the atoning Saviour? They speak of divine goodness in sparing you yet many blessings. But is there one of them all that tells you of the goodness of God in afflicting you? No, they do not understand that. Their hearts have learned submission as little as we had learned it, when mother died. Now sister, I beseech you, turn not away from the view of your own sinful heart. Let your mind dwell on it, till by God's spirit, you discover, as I did, in my own bosom, its dark, deadly depravity. Humble yourself before God, and confess your guilt, your pride, your sinful life of worldly pleasure, your forgetfulness of the claims of his holy character to your love; of his law, to your heart's obedience; of your fellow-men, to your wealth, your prayers, your toils for their good. Did you ever think of loving *the souls* of others? When you taught poor Lily to read the Bible, was her salvation from sin

and death your motive? Did you pray that her heart might be holy? You pitied one so ignorant; but did you weep over her sinfulness? Satisfied that she reformed her outward life, did you seek to purify her heart? I speak of her as a *test* of the state of your heart, because she was so entirely under your control. You won praise, and deserved it, for the decision that rescued her from a life of shame, and restored her to society. But was it compassion for the *woman*, or a desire to save the *sinner*? Did you ever think of praying with her? Did you speak to her of Christ, the dying Saviour, who would take away her sins? or was it only of virtue, honor, restored happiness and respect? You did well; but did you act as a *Christian*.

Have I read your heart, my sister? Oh then let me point you to my Comforter? Look up to the cross! He died to save you. He has all the affections of a loving, human heart. He wept over the grave of his friend. He wept with the sisters of Bethany. His warmest sympathies are ever with the sorrowing. And then, he has *power*; power to take away the very source of all sorrow; power to say: 'daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee.' His hand can wipe away all tears, and His Holy Spirit fill your bosom, in an hour, with peace, comfort, joy. He can reveal to you his holy, pure, self-deny-



ing character, as the one worthy object of your entire love and worship ; and fill your soul with such peace as all the world cannot impart or take from you. He takes away the remorse of sin, the *humiliating* sense of guilt, the shame for sin. He teaches us to abhor our sinful pride, to be clothed with humility, to rejoice in affliction, to strive to console ourselves, not by solitude and tears, but by *doing* good to others. You say your poor neighbor is dead. Have you been there, two mourners, to weep together ? I think I see your heart. It says : ‘ she is not a proper associate for me.’ I grant it ; but the refined, the educated, the gifted, may weep with the humblest and most debased of the poor. Did not your very station, and your common sorrow render it fitting that you should forget, for the time, the barriers of society, and carry peace to the guilty family if you could ? Ah, sister, the blessed Comforter was wanting to your own heart ! The spirit of Christ, the image of Divine benevolence was not in your own bosom, and you knew not how to comfort one who, like you, had both shame and sorrow at once. Oh sister, whom I have so long loved, for whom I have prayed and wept, even in your proudest days of happiness, let fraternal love warn as well as entreat you to flee at once to the Saviour. Cast on him your double burden of sor-



row and sin ; He will forgive the one and soothe the other, as no power of earthly sympathy can, as no ministering angel may. Lift up your fallen spirit to the revealed Deity ; the God clothed in the likeness of sinful flesh, for the very purpose of removing our sins and woes, and so making us ‘partakers of the Divine nature.’ In the face of the Man of sorrows, behold the compassion of a God. In the eye of human sympathy, that weeps over the tomb of the loved one, see the mercy of the Lord of all power. In the voice of his tender love, hear the words of glory : ‘I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live !’ Is not here a balm for your spirit ? Is not here a power to give you consolation and peace ? Is there not here One worthy of love ? In living to Him and for Him who died for us, will you not find comfort ? Is he not wisdom, strength, life, peace, all the soul needs ? Come, beloved G., lay aside the spirit of heaviness, and take from Christ the garments of praise. Devote your life to Him. Your literary tastes, your musical talents, your social influence, your wealth, let *all* be given to the task of winning others to his love. Who, in all your circle, give proof that the love of God is the spring of their actions ? In whose face does Christ ap-

pear, in the glory of his self-denying love? Oh, wake to live for him! My dearest sister, I have written with many tears—with constant prayer. In the day of prosperity you thought me harsh, too strict, wanting in the mildness of the Christian, because I could not smile on a life of pleasure. Now, in the day of sorrows, hear my voice of love, and let our Saviour bid you live. Then you shall rejoice that you have been afflicted; that your bright morning found so bitter a night so near.

With sympathy and love,

Your brother W.

*March 12, 18—.*”

“Cruel, cruel brother! Why must he add more bitterness to my grief? Does he not know I differ from him in his new creed? Am I to be set down as one utterly lost in sin? But after all”—and here was a pause of serious reflection, followed by a flood of tears—“after all, he is not unkind. And I am proud. Oh, he has been reading my heart too truly! I have lived to myself, and not for Christ. There is something more than a *creed* in all this. Let me read it again.” It was read again, and again. Conscience acknowledged the truth of the dark picture, so faithfully, yet tenderly drawn. The sinful heart began a fierce struggle. Pride counselled anger at the reprover. The letter was torn in two, and cast indignantly aside; and the

weeping, passionate widow fled to her chamber, and wept alone, on her bed, in agony—there was no sleep for her that night.

#### IV. *The Physicians.*

A week later, the young widow was tossing on her bed, unable to rise. She was sick, so they all said, around her; all but one, the humble woman who had *dreamed*, so long before, of the *great light* just in the direction of this dwelling! She saw the struggles of the sin-sick soul. But she was only the nurse for the body. Never left alone, regarded as a weak enthusiast, she could not speak to the proud and sick lady, of the Saviour. What ailed her? The pastor came, once and again. She did not weep; yet she seemed in anguish. “Where is your pain?”

“Oh, it is my heart; I have crucified my Saviour! I have rejected him who bought me with His blood. I must die in sin!”

“But you wander, you are not such a guilty being. How have you sinned so much? Surely your woes will cancel such sins as your pure life allowed.”

“Oh, my heart is full of pride and selfishness. I have lived without God.”

“Surely, my dear G—, you are wrong—calm yourself. You have always respected religion, you

have sincerely admired the benevolence and goodness of God in all his works and ways. You have never wilfully broken his laws. He will not be a severe Judge."

"Oh yes, I have never *loved his holiness*. I loved pleasure, and was dead while I lived. God was afar off, and Christ had no comeliness to my soul. I saw no need of a dying Saviour; and now his frown is upon my soul! Oh pray that my sins may be forgiven, or I must perish."

"Surely you do not fear that you are to be cast into an eternal hell, for any sin you have committed!"

"Oh, I have *sinned*. My sins are great. How shall I wash away my sins? It is not that I fear wrath, but because I deserve it that I cry for relief. Oh, what shall I do?"

It was a new case for the pastor. He had heard of such things among the benighted "orthodox," but he regarded it as weakness, or worse. In vain, day after day he tried to calm her spirit. It would not rest. The agitated mind prostrated the vigor of the body. The pulses quickened and beat with the violence of a fever. The clear, powerful intellect dwelt always on the great evil of sin, a sinful heart, in which the love of pleasure reigned, where the love of Christ should have ruled alone. The

pastor knew no remedy for her disease; he was not sure but it was insanity. So the physician was sent for. He, too, was a member, and, in fact, if not by formal choice, for many years an officer of the church. He had heard cries for mercy by the couch of the dying sinner. But here was a new case for him. Here was one of spotless life, amiable temper, well educated, groaning in anguish over the sins of the heart! It was a new case. Then he felt the pulse, and the brow that burned like fire. She had a fever! There was danger of inflammation of the brain! He ordered her an emetic, and some powders every two hours! They were faithfully given. Poor medicine to purge away the burden of sin from the guilty conscience!

That night the widow remembered the torn letter. "Oh run Mrs. M., and bring me a letter you will find in the parlor. Oh, I was wicked to tear it." It was brought,—read again with tears. *Now*, it was no longer cruel. It told of *Christ*, just such a Saviour, just such a Comforter, just such a Physician as her soul needed. She turned to the pious nurse. "Is there any hope that Christ will receive one so guilty as I am? Oh, I have been blind to all his dying love!"

"He came to seek and to save that which was lost;" "not to call the righteous, but sinners to

repentance." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." So answered the poor widow, in the words of holy writ, while the rich widow, poor in her riches, bowed with all her soul to the majesty of the simple word of God. Now the glory of the cross was revealed to her; and she cried out, "Oh, I have found Him; I have found my Saviour; help me to praise Him! Oh what a glorious, holy, kind, gracious Lord he is!"

Then her sweet voice burst out into a song of praise, in the words so often sung without thought,

"Now to the Lamb that once was slain,  
Be endless honors given."

Before the stanza was ended, her voiced choked. But it was with rapture! She "made melody in her heart unto the Lord."

The morning dawned sweetly. It was the Sabbath. The fever of the pulse was gone. The calmness of holy joy was in the soul, and the clear intellect saw the glory of the Invisible God revealed in his Son. It was a day of joy and praise. Such a Sabbath had not been known in that old mansion for half a century. The very air seemed vocal with praise.

The news soon spread far and wide. The pastor came, and found a gentle, joyous spirit, meek and mild, but fervent in exhorting *him*, too, to seek that Saviour she had found. The physician was pointed to a remedy for sin he had never known. Friends were warned, counselled, entreated, prayed for. Some doubted, some mocked, some listened. But the pious rejoiced and thanked God that the "great light" shone! The poor widow said the "little lights" would soon appear! And they did! I cannot follow the after life; the praying wife and mother, the leader of the social circle for worship, the teacher of the Sabbath school, the Bible class; the faithful guide to youthful relatives, the reprover of sin and unbelief in the matured. Life closed too soon. But not till many precious fruits followed that strange sickness, and the remedies of the physicians! There was no insanity here; nothing to destroy the force of the example. Here was wealth, education, literary tastes, fashion, loveliness, all consecrated to Christ, with views of truths so clear, with humility so marked, with experience so rich, that none who were willing to see could doubt it was the *work of God*. It carried the gospel, in its living power, again, into the centre of the most refined circle of Home and its vicinage. So the widow's



God became her friend. Her comforter was her Saviour. And henceforth, in the eyes of all, she lived for him. There were errors, foibles, weaknesses ; but " the life of faith on the Son of God," was not concealed by them. The brother rejoiced. The angels rejoiced. And doth not the Lord rejoice over the " lost, found ?" He " taketh them in his arms and carrieth them in his bosom." He has " loved them with an everlasting love." On his throne of glory his heart is in all their sorrow, and rejoices in all the bliss he bestows on them, in the fulness of his own love. And when they lay aside the body of clay, " his hand shall lead them in green pastures, and by the still waters ;" his voice shall teach them the " new song" which none can sing but his redeemed ones. There " his servants shall serve him," in holy, useful, blessed activity, forever.

## CHAPTER XI.\*

Old ties broken—THE FAITHFUL PASTOR—Old George—The Bible Class—The vicious saved—Election justified; the narrative—The strayed sheep looked up—The aged sinner saved—The poor-house—Sabbath schools—Laws of sanctification—Temperance—The last argument; holy living.

HARD was the struggle when the disciples at last withdrew from the places where our fathers had worshipped so long. The very graves around seemed to reproach them! On that seat, the now gray headed man of fourscore, when a tiny boy

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\* As the details of the preceding chapter are simple matters of history, the reader may be interested to know some additional facts, inadvertently omitted by the author, serving to connect the heroine of the last chapter with "the faithful pastor" of the following. He it is, who was summoned to her aid, when the advice of her accustomed spiritual guide and the prescriptions of her physician all proved unavailing. He it is, who with the "poor widow," stood by the bed-side of that agonized woman and talked to her of the good physician; told her of that bleeding and atoning Lamb, and urged her to believe and live. And when, at last, her "lips were filled with rejoicing," his voice

had seen his silken haired great-grand-father, as he worshipped "leaning on the top of his staff." Every beam of the old edifice had some sacred association. There were the friends of his childhood. With them he must part, for Christ's sake. The wife left the husband behind. The child did not always follow the parent. And when, for the last time, the aged walked slowly away from that house, after lingering in its aisles, on its door-stone, by the hill-side, many a sad look was cast back, and the head bowed down, the tear trickled over faces not often seen so moistened by the tears of sorrow. But Christ required it. The faith of the gospel was no longer preached; the Lord had given them numbers and a heart to maintain his worship in its purity; and all these old and tender associations must be broken up.

The formation of churches composed of living members of the body of Christ, was soon followed by the settlement of faithful pastors. Then, in

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mingled with hers in ascriptions of praise. It was their *first* song together, but not their *last*, as the domestic altar and the secret chamber of the wife and husband will attest.

The indulgent reader will readily pardon the author for the above omission, when told that the entire manuscript of this book was written in the *eleven days* which intervened between Mr. Torrey's conviction and sentence.—PUB.

succession, all the varied means of growth in knowledge and grace were enjoyed, and the work of renovation was more rapidly onward.

True, the bitter feelings connected with the separations closed, for a time, some minds against the truth. It spoke so loudly to men of the fallen state of the old churches, that many, whose hearts were ruled, partly by pride, and partly by old associations, were grieved and angry. So there were reproaches, curses, tears. The path of duty is not always a pleasant one. Peace does not always follow the steps that the wisdom of the just may indicate.

Still, as time run on, such feelings pass away. Many wished to hear the new pastors. If their doctrines were not always understood, or, if understood, not loved, still there was no doubt about their holy living. They had faults, weaknesses, foibles, like other men. But their zeal, humility, faith and love for the soul were not hid.

The idea of the *faithful pastor* was revived once more. One was a man of polished manners. He was a ripe scholar, an agreeable companion. His preaching was instructive, his doctrine ever maintained by reference to the Bible alone. There was a directness and plainness in his addresses to the conscience, that it was not easy to avoid. It was his rule, that no man should ever be able to

say, "I have seen the pastor, and he never spoke to me of the soul and the Saviour." It was not always wise; but the honest fidelity with which he acted on it, commanded respect. "The man must be in earnest," it was said. It was a new thing, too. Our old pastors were not superior to him in talent, learning or refinement. But *they* never talked so to all men, and to the very children, of sin, death, and Christ the Lamb of God.

There was a despised couple, a woman of feeble powers, and the man commonly known as old George. Perhaps, in past days, rum had done its work in destroying the manhood of the man. Then they were poor; objects of charity, just kept out of the alms-house. Their little old dwelling, with its one room and a garret, was the meanest hovel in all the parish. True, it was very neat. The worn out floor was clean and nicely sanded. In summer the fire-place was always filled with pine boughs, and wreaths of winter-green and wild flowers were thrown over the little looking-glass and mantle-piece. The mind was feeble, but the love of God's beautiful things was not lost. They could not say it, but they saw his smiles in their flowers and foliage.

Among the very first to frequent the new place of worship was this humble couple. There was

many a patch, not always of uniform color, in the old garments. But they were decent. Modestly, they took the "*lowest seat.*" But they were not despised, there, as the worldly church despised them. Nor did the Holy One refuse to be called their Father. So "this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him," and filled his bosom and that of his meek companion with the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy and peace.

The pastor rejoiced to see how "God chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." Their little hut was made the place of stated prayer, and evening preaching. Many an excellent sermon was preached there. People said it was not "respectable," and wondered the pastor could find no better place; and when he formed a Bible Class there, too, and made it so interesting that the children of our first families flocked to that poor house even in stormy nights, the thing became even more strange. The invitation to meet in more "decent" places was given; but the pastor saw that God honored the poor hut, and *he* would do what the Lord had done. So the Bible Class generally met in the little room, from year to year. How full of humble, quiet happiness that poor man and his wife were, on those days! Had God, in very deed so honored their low estate? Did

the rich, the proud, the wise come to their old dwelling to learn the way of life? How could they thank God enough, for such *honor*! In that little room a family altar was built. There was none in the houses of the rich, for a mile around. In that little garret was a place for constant secret prayer. Did the rich love to pray to "Our Father who seeth in secret?" So they honored God, and he honored them, and made their little hut a Bethel. Souls were born there. And now, when a few years only have passed away, every regular member of the Bible Class, save one or two, is a child of God! Some have already entered into their rest. Some live, and their light shines.

Three of the group are pastor's wives; one is a professor in a theological school, two more are preparing to preach the gospel to the lost. When the world is burned up, if that little hovel does not sooner decay, many will wish to have it spared! If the arts of design are cultivated in a future world, as I doubt not they will be—many a pencil dipped in light will depict that old cottage, and its humble inmates.

As religion honored the weak, so it began to reform the profligate. In two instances, men of the most depraved morals, brutal in ignorance, drunken, profane, lewd, "to every good work reprobate," were reclaimed, and became striking



proofs of the power of grace. Everybody admitted that they "*needed* to be born again." But it struck some, very forcibly, that no such results had followed the popular preaching, for a long time. Morality had been promoted by it, no doubt. But the conversion of a thoroughly bad man into one noted for purity, meekness and self-denial, was a new thing in Home. It seemed to some that Christ had indeed come to call sinners to repentance. In one instance the effect was striking. A man of strong mind, well acquainted with the truths of the gospel, had long been resisting the voice of love. His reasoning intellect was thoroughly convinced that the doctrine of election was true; a part of God's government, not merely revealed in the Bible, but written all over the history of man and angels. And he did not deny the right of the wise, holy, and just God to decide the destiny of all his creatures.

But the heart refused to submit to the authority that the conscience and mind admitted to be right. The struggle was severe. One night, a young relative, who had found Christ in a distant city, had been speaking, in a little upper room, of the Saviour he had found. The sinful heart was touched, but the old struggle revived again.

"Why," said the sinner, "why am I left? I have often felt that it was a great hardship that

others were taken and I was left. 'There are this and that man—naming the converts—who have always lived bad lives, profligate, swearers, despising everything that is good. Still they are converted. I have always been moral, respected religion, and tried to do right towards others; but there's no mercy, no pardon for my sinful heart.' The strong man's frame shook with the anguish of his mind.

"Perhaps," it was said, "these guilty men will be better examples than you, more needed, here, to show the power of grace. And, then, are you quite sure that a mother's prayers and holy life have not kept you from grosser depravity than these men showed? Are you sure your heart is really any better? You admit that you are a sinner?" "Oh yes, I feel that; that is all my trouble. I may be as guilty as they, in heart; but why are they preferred to me?"

"I am not God, to answer to his motives. But if you are guilty, is he under any obligation to have mercy on you?"

"No, I know he is not bound to save me." "Then, look at your heart. Even now, it rebels against the principles of his government that you admit to be founded in his own wisdom, power and justice. With such a heart, is it not just and right that God should leave you to perish?"

The conscience of the sinner answered "yes."  
"Then, if you do perish, the justice of God will be known in it. God has seen your sinful heart, been very gracious to you, long-suffering has marked all his dealings with you; blessings are multiplied to win your gratitude; Christ is as freely offered to you, as to any other man. And if, after all, you *are* a "vessel of wrath," will not God be justified, by your own character, in the eyes of all men?"

The sinner again assented in silence. "Now, it is not certain that you are to be lost. You are yet alive; you see your guilt; conscience is not deadened; the Holy Spirit is evidently striving with you to lead you to Christ. And, the only way in which you, or we can *know* whether you are elected or not, will be by the result of the conflict between your heart and the Holy Spirit. Is it not so? Then, suppose you grieve the Holy Spirit to depart from you. Will that change one fact in the Divine Government? It may settle the question that you perish; but your admitted sins will justify God, no matter what his reasons may be for sparing others as guilty as you. The very fact of your election is unknown to you or others. And it is in vain to ask the reasons of a fact, when the fact itself is beyond our knowledge."

"But what shall I do, then?"

“That is just the point. *Submit* to the government of God. It must be founded in perfect wisdom, justice and goodness, whether you see all God’s motives and reasons for action, or not. Let me ask you ; which would be the most guilty of the two, in refusing submission ; these debased, ignorant men, or you, with your clear views of God’s character and will ? Which would God be more honored in sparing, in view of the degrees of light you enjoy ? And if spared, are you any ways sure that your whole life, here and hereafter, will be as useful to the kingdom of Christ as theirs ?”

He admitted there *might be very good reasons, besides his own guilt, why others should be saved in preference to him*—and this is the doctrine of election, the whole of it: *viz—“That there are reasons aside from the obligations of justice to the moral character of the subjects of Divine government, why one man is made a subject of Divine mercy, and another is not.”* Is it not according to common sense, as well as the Bible ?

“Then what is your plain duty ? Are you wiser than God, that you shall undertake to judge of his decisions, before you know what they are, or on what they are based ? Enough for you to know that he has provided for your pardon, by the blood of his Son ; and that he offers you mercy

if you will submit to have him reign over you. Will you do so?"

So the proud heart was broken, and the sinner knelt, and confessed his guilty rebellion, and rose up "justified;" the love of God filling his heart. No longer he complains that others are saved; he only wonders why *he* was spared; why frowning justice consented to smile on his soul, and mercy stooped to heal his sinful heart. And, in every form of trial and suffering, since that hour, he has proved that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was sufficient for him.

The faithful pastor did not omit to preach in the neglected districts, where piety had been almost forgotten. There, indeed, the gospel was welcomed. The young, especially, crowded the school-houses and dwellings to hear the words of life. Some, too, came to mock. Some of the older sinners were angry at being disturbed in their sins. Repent; not they! Keep the Sabbath? Why, they didn't work much, and as for avoiding other modes of desecrating it, that was an "orthodox" affair. But still, in those districts where the people had so entirely forgotten the public worship of God, there was very little error prevalent, the heart did not seem so indurated by sin. One family after another, who had listened to the evening sermon

in the school-room, began to frequent the house of worship. A visible improvement in morals, intelligence, good manners, and taste in dress appeared, even where the heart was not affected. In a few years, these neglected, forgotten districts were more fully instructed in the truths of the gospel than, perhaps, any other part of Home. On those who sat in darkness, great light shone. There was one conversion, early in the revival of pure faith in Home, that always impressed me very much. It was that of an aged sinner.

He was a soldier, both in the old French war, and in the Revolution. He had a mind of far more than ordinary power; his reasoning faculties were especially strong. No disguises of sophistry could blind his powers of analysis. I believe he always derided, as weak, the arguments men urged against the doctrines of the Pilgrims. Not that he cared for religion; not he! In the army he became intemperate and infidel in his views, or rather in his *feelings* more properly. He never would hear any one assail the truth without reply! He had a frame of iron. No severity of toil seemed to shake it. In old age he had the strength of early manhood. But he lived in sin. In other days, his life was a standing reproach to the gospel. For who so constantly and powerfully defended the *doctrines* of the Bible, as this gray

headed sinner! Men said that they preferred a better life with a shorter creed! They did not so much consider that his life was at war with his theory. At last, when nearly fourscore years old, the Holy Spirit made the truths his lips had always defended, a sword to slay the sins of his heart. The gray head became a crown of glory, because it was found in the way of righteousness. Storm or sunshine, his venerable form was always in the pulpit, by the side of the minister, though he lived remote from the meeting. The last time I saw him was at his own fireside. He had lived to see almost one hundred years. Many around him had arisen up to bless him for his prayers, his warnings, his holy living. He spoke with an old soldier's ardor of the struggles of our fathers in the days of peril; but his eyes lighted up with rapture when the Captain of salvation was named. "Yes, I shall soon see him in his glory! I am waiting to be called home. And then I shall no longer be fettered with this dying body; for I know I shall be like Him."

The people of Home were ever humane to the poor. It was one of the first towns in the country to provide well, *handsomely*, for their comfort. But the soul was forgotten, till the faithful pastor set the example of preaching in the poor-house.



There, too, fruits of his fidelity were found. Thus, in all Home, the poor, once more, had the gospel preached to them. If the gospel was hidden from any class, as such, it was from the rich. For, perhaps, at no period did the selfish, grasping spirit of our rich men become so manifest, and so hard to be borne by its victims, as after the restoration of the pure faith was begun. They hardened themselves in sin, and sometimes took no little pains to draw others away from the faith. With what fiendish joy one of them once boasted of his success in "driving religion out of the head" of a young man who had been awakened, and seemed almost persuaded to be a Christian ! The young man afterwards became a profligate infidel, and for years was a despiser of all good, and especially of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The spiritual pastors\* at once gave their attention to the instruction of the young. The Sabbath schools and Bible classes they formed in different parts of the town embraced not only the youth of their own churches, but many others, who had no religious instruction at home. The aged, too, soon began to join the classes ; the more readily, because the old country habit of staying at noon

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\* Referring to the Baptists and Methodists, as well as the Congregationalists.

was still common. I never felt deeper emotion than when standing before a Sabbath school class composed of eight persons over seventy years of age. All but one of them were old disciples. What could youth teach them of the love of Christ, or the experiences of the Christian life? The teacher became the pupil. But the example was a blessed one. It taught all men to *reverence the Bible*, to see gray heads sitting down with little children, often their great-grand-children, to study its sacred pages.

The teachers of error began to be aware of the power the Sabbath school was gaining, for the gospel, over the minds of the young. Much as they derided Ellen C's school, years before, it now began to be found out, that if the young mind was so pure by nature, it would not continue so without appropriate education. This drew some away from the influences of the gospel. But with hardly one exception, all of the first generation of Sabbath scholars are now members of the churches. For some years, there were scarcely any others converted to Christ. I know not that many were converted by the direct agency of Sabbath school instruction. But they were prepared by it for an intelligent hearing of the gospel. So that it was the same thing, in the end. Give me a thorough, intelligent acquaintance with

the doctrines of the Bible, in the hearer, if you wish to have his soul subdued by the power of the cross. It is a mistake to suppose that such an acquaintance with the truth hardens the heart. Nay, repeated awakenings, by the Holy Spirit, do not harden the heart, unless the power of grace is directly and wilfully resisted. It rather prepares the way for an easier conquest of the affections for Christ. Probably very little faithful teaching is unaccompanied by divine influence. It would be a sad task, indeed, to teach our children day by day, morning and evening, "here a little and there a little," if the necessary effect, by the laws of their nature, sinful as it may be, was to harden them, up to the hour of their conversion. My mind was first called to the fallacy of the popular notion on this subject, by the reports of the Ceylon Mission. The substance of the repeated statements of Poor, Winslow, Scudder, and other spiritual men and clear observers, was, that those who had once been awakened, were the surest to be again the subjects of divine influence, and the most certain to become, after a time, the children of God. Much observation, since, has confirmed the view. While the renewal of the heart, in one respect, is the work of divine power, in a moment of time, still, every power of the soul, before and after that point, is gradually *educated* by the Holy

Spirit, and trained to harmonious, holy action. This is the reason why those who are well trained for years, are more useful and well balanced disciples, than persons who have lived to adult years ignorant of the gospel. The soil is better fitted for the sower ; the harvest is richer. When will men learn that the power of the Holy Spirit is ever acting upon every human soul?—that its sanctifying power is, in general, just in proportion to the amount of truth, adapted to the condition and wants of the individual mind!—that this is the philosophy of the direction to divide rightly the word of truth, giving to every man his portion in due season?—that, in a word, the *laws of sanctification* are as fixed, as immutable, and may be as perfectly known as the principles of Chemistry or any other science?

I have much wished to see some profound reasoning intellect, governed by holy affections, devote years of life to an *analysis of Christian experience*, as developed by the lives of all classes of men. The greatest source of error would be, that we have so imperfect a record of the errors and sins of any. Who would ever know that Payson had a fault, from his memoir? Yet, if he had not sins many and obvious, his diary is only a new case of the morbid anatomy of dis-

eased piety? The biography that so conceals the nature of the sins of an eminent Christian is of little value, with reference to any real progress in divine life. The value of the lessons of the judgment day will very much depend on its perfect development of the sins of the holy, their struggles with temptation, and the modes in which the victory was secured.

The temperance reform, like all other reformations in morals, is no party or sectarian work. Yet it is true, beyond question, that those who loved the pure faith were its earliest, most ardent friends. For years, the pious who were not its friends were the rare exceptions. It was not so with other men. But in the end, all men are led to see the moral value of such reforms; and a thousand motives, besides a regard to man's spiritual welfare may, nay *ought* to excite men to labor in them. For every right motive, whether it is drawn from the influence an act may exert on ourselves or others, our present good, or our salvation, should have its proper place. Only, let the love of Christ be the controlling, governing principle of our life. Then we shall please him, while we benefit our fellow-men.

There is a large class of men who do not judge of the truth or value of any religious doctrine by its effects on their sympathies, or its appeals to

their reason. They may admit your arguments to be strong, your proofs decisive, your appeals eloquent. Still, they refuse to submit their own hearts to its claims. It is not from enmity to the gospel. They hate it no more than other sinners; perhaps not so much. They treat it with respect. But they want to see its value tested by *experience*. As they see men made more pure, honest, meek, humble, benevolent, by its power, they yield themselves to its control. It is in vain you tell them that God has a rightful claim to their hearts, to-day. They may admit it. But if they see God manifest in the life of the disciple, and that life is holy, your argument has power. The class of cautious, ultra, prudent men, I believe are seldom won to Christ by any other power than that of the Christian life. And, on the introduction of the pure faith where it has been forgotten or is unknown, the influence of religion on the temper, the passions, the social habits, the morals, and other more obvious acts of the Christian, will be far more carefully weighed, by this class of men, than the inward spirit. If the outer temple is fair and firm, they may venture within. The more sanguine, at once examine the very penetralia of the building. It is not easy to say which form the most useful Christians when they

are converted. But their very nature makes the first more firm in purpose, though their power to win others by appeals to their affections is less. It once tried me, very much, when I saw this cautious, steady, cool-headed class of men, in Home, so steadily, as it seemed, holding themselves aloof from the influences of the gospel. I set them down as hardened in their worldliness. It was only their natural temperament. When time enough had elapsed to argue with them by the power of holy living, they began, one after another, to yield themselves to Christ. Holy families were needed, to develop the power of the gospel, in all the relations of life. God raised them up, and scattered them, as if on purpose, in every remote section of the town; so that none might want the means, in their ordinary intercourse with men, of comparing the teachings of the spiritual faith with the lives of those who claimed to love it. The result was and is favorable to the truth. What preaching could not do for some, holy living and holy dying have done. Men have seen the truth

“drawn out in living characters,”

and therefore they have said that they too would yield their best affections to its control.



## CHAPTER XII.

The dead left alone—Satire, yet truth—Religion imitated—Spirit without knowledge—Preaching *of* Christ, but not preaching Christ—The wild flower—Piety in children—Benevolence—Paid pastors no “hirelings.”

WHEN the godly withdraw from a corrupt church, the first effect upon the old body is evil. It leaves the corrupt to themselves. They have none, or very little, of the principle of life remaining. “The blind lead the blind and both fall into the ditch.” It should induce caution. We may decide rashly to withdraw from the corrupt body, before all hope of renewed life is really gone. And while we are permitted, even with much suffering, to labor within the body to revive it, it is seldom wise to withdraw. When once the pious have separated, it requires time and many forms of influence to give, from without, the impulse to reform within the body. But it can be done. Faith and perseverance build the city, or destroy it.

No more severe or just estimate of the spiritual condition of the decayed church, when the pious

have departed was ever drawn, than in a letter that a fallen minister addressed to one of the churches of Home, after the death of their pastor. It was to this effect :

“ Dear Friends.—I warmly sympathize with you in view of the great loss you have sustained in the removal of your pastor to another, and, I trust, a better world. I feel for the church, and would be glad to do anything in my power for its welfare. I will very gladly come and preach for you, at a cheap rate, till you have time to look about you for another shepherd. And I am *not at all particular what doctrines I preach* ; be it Unitarianism, Universalism or Orthodoxy. I will conform to the wishes you may express on the subject, being always willing to give satisfaction to my employers, and especially to benefit those in whom I naturally feel so deep an interest, as I do in the people of Home. Let me hear soon, and believe me, I am as you are, and you are as I am.

W. W.”

The pious are stable in their opinions, because their doctrinal views enter deeply into their Christian experience. But when the truth is lost, the mind of man is often like the waves of the sea. There is very little definiteness of ideas or firmness

of belief on religious topics. There is a marked disposition, always, to substitute "sincerity" or "liberality," or some other equivocal virtue, for true holiness; and amiable manners and feelings, for the love of Christ. The people, in general, were "not particular about doctrines," unless the majority might be averse to the truth. A few desired to hear the faith of the fathers once more. One humble man spoke of the need of a pious pastor. The most, wanted the zeal and efficiency of true religion, without the doctrines that gave them birth. In a word, the gospel had so far impressed all minds, that a conviction that some important change in their condition was needed, was universal. Some preferred to adopt a newer system of error. Others preferred to attempt an imitation of the religious life, without the principles on which it should have been founded.

The Sabbath school, it was very easy to copy, in form, though it was not so easy to find men willing to pray at the opening of its session, if the pastor was not there.

The social prayer-meeting was far more difficult to copy. Men were not in the habit of praying. They had no great idea of the power or utility of prayer; and their hearts did not love it. So the meeting became a social gathering, where ladies

brought their knitting, and fruits and jellies were served up. Still, the opening prayer, and the hour spent in conversation respecting Bible truths, were not without benefit. The teaching here, and in the Sabbath school, might be full of error ; but there could hardly fail to be much truth also. And when men meet together for the very purpose of studying the Bible, with reference to its practical influence over their own hearts and lives, it cannot fail to have a decided tendency to sanctify them, or to prepare them to *be* sanctified. When the Bible is familiarly studied, not all the daring sophistries of the false teacher can divest the mind of the impressions which its plain statements of the truths of redemption will make. Family worship, in a few instances, was re-established, by the aid of forms of prayer. But in many, the use of these forms as read, became the substitute of secret prayer.

The influence from without is felt in various forms. Some, while on visits to friends abroad, become truly converted to Christ. Holy affections are kindled in their hearts. And, to the extent to which there is time to mature their experience as Christians, their intellectual views of the gospel become correct. Returning, however, under the old influences before they have time even fully to

understand the nature of their new emotion, listening again to the teachings of error, they make slow progress in the intellectual knowledge of the gospel. But their zeal, their spirituality, their love, the sense of guilt and the need of a holy nature remain. These fail not to make an impression for good on others. Not a few, too, are thus converted, by the occasional hearing of the word, or by reading, at home. Like the other class, their imperfect knowledge hinders their progress in divine life; still life exists. They cease to oppose the gospel. They are zealous for its reforming influence and agencies. They are benevolent in their lives. In many a church where error is preached, praying circles of true children of God have thus been formed. They are found in every stage of progress. One, by heartfelt experience has learned the value of one, another of five, another of ten important ideas, never, or seldom heard in the pulpit. They are somewhat like a blind man feeling his way cautiously in the dark. Their progress is slow, but their steps firm. It *is* progress.

Some persons of this class have entered the ministry, in such churches. Their serious, pungent preaching, has been followed by real revivals of religion, of true religion; imperfect in its views,

defective in its experiences, but still bearing the impress of the Holy Spirit. Of course, the truth not seen by the mind, cannot be employed by the Spirit to sanctify the heart. But life once begun, the Lord of life will carry on his gracious work to its consummation, in the world of glory.

Such instances, of a recent date, are not wanting in the churches of Home. May God multiply them a hundred fold !

In the attempt to revive the spirit of piety without its principles, many of the richest treasures of Christian faith in our language, have been widely circulated in Home and elsewhere. The practical works of Flavel, Baxter, Bunyan, Edwards, the Abbots, and a score more, full of spiritual and saving truth, not stated in offensive logical forms, but in its relation to the affections of sinful and holy hearts, cannot be read without saving benefit to many. " Circulate these volumes," I once said to a dear friend, " and we shall soon agree in our views of Christ and his gospel."

" If the result follows such means, I shall heartily rejoice in it," was the reply. The work is begun !

How often have I mourned over the defective preaching of the truths of salvation ! The great defect is the logical forms by which the truth is

taken out of its relations to human character and experience. No matter about the logic of the doctrine of election? The important thing is to induce submission to the *will* of God. That will is the will of a holy, just, gracious God. His *attributes* give him the *right* to control us, and fit him to do it. Hence the duty of cordial submission to his government. But to fight over the logical battle respecting the relations of God's mind, will, and decisions to our theoretical freedom, is of little avail to the mass of minds. In logic, the masses will reject your truth. Preach it with single reference to faith, submission and humility, and they will love it.

So, what matters it that you have ten thousand volumes of logical proof that Christ is God? and as many more that he is Man? Both are true; but neither of them is the Bible doctrine of Christ. It is the God *manifested*; the love, mercy, wisdom and power of God *revealed* in the face of Jesus Christ, that shall "draw all men unto him." I do not mean to say that the *facts* are of no importance. But a single fact will show my meaning clearly. I have listened, perhaps, to 200 sermons on the Deity of Christ. None of them, save one, was preached with *primary* and *direct* reference to Christian experience! I care not, as a dying



sinner, for the fact that my Saviour is God ; unless you show me the *glory* of God, shining in his face. Show me the attributes of his character, and my heart leaps forth to embrace him. A few “ Revival Preachers,” so called, such as Burchard and Finney, have understood this, and their most effective sermons have often been, what I term practical sermons on the Deity of Christ. So of other gospel doctrines. Preach them as they relate to the hopes, fears, struggles, doubts, temptations, trials, joys, triumphs of the Christian life on earth and in heaven ; and they become the power of God unto salvation. Alas, how many might be obliged to laid aside their preaching of Christian experience, because that to do justice to such a theme, one must know more of it ! Prove by texts and logic, the doctrine of total depravity ; and I hate it ! But point out the daily proofs of pride, selfishness, vanity, unbelief, in the heart and life, and I “ abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” For my own common sense teaches me that such corrupt fruit cannot spring from a good tree.

In the sands of the desert, sweet wild flowers sometimes bloom in beauty. There was one example of early piety in Home, after the awakening commenced in individual minds, that was never accounted for by any reference to external teaching.

There was no adult member of the family, or its connections, that professed, in theory or practice, to be born of the Spirit ; none who believed such a doctrine. They were rigidly moral, kind, social. In one respect the family was a model. Without much resort to the rod, the children, from infancy, were trained to instant obedience to their parents. I never knew more prompt and cheerful obedience. This made the family circle an affectionate one. But it was worldly. Prayer was never heard there. It was the youngest son. He was a lovely boy ; he *was* beautiful. His soft flaxen hair curled in ringlets on his neck. His slight form was rounded, and elastic. Every motion was graceful. His blue eye was full of mirth. I am not aware that he was intelligent beyond his years ; but his gentleness, modesty, wit and affectionate temper, made him loved by all. I never loved a companion of my youth as I loved him. Before he was eight years old, he was cut down as the tender grass. In the intervals of suffering, he told his weeping friends what delight he had taken in prayer, and in the Word of God, for months before. He was sure he should go to that Saviour he loved ; and whose glory as a Saviour from sin, had been revealed to his heart. He bade them shed no tears for him, but prepare to follow him up to the throne of the Lamb.

It was strange, some said, to hear such a mere child talk so ! So it was, in Home. He had been taught by the Holy Spirit, while none knew the emotions of his young heart, and fitted to be thus early transplanted to the garden of God.

Another instance at a later period, was more readily accounted for. A bright boy, not much older, was often loitering around the doors at the meetings in the hut of old George. His parents would not suffer him to enter. Now and then he crept into a corner at an evening lecture. He was a passionate boy, full of pride, yet with a warm heart. None ever spoke to him of Christ, in the fraternal dwelling. But he learned enough of the way of Life, while loitering around the hut, to be led by the Spirit to walk in it. In a few months his young mind seemed to grasp the great truths of the gospel with a man's vigor. What joy he found in communion with the Saviour ! He, too, was cut down in an hour. The faithful reproofs of sin and error, given on his dying pillow, roused more than one slumbering conscience from a long night of sin. But God took him up to his home.

The spectacle of youthful piety is not now rare in Home. And men see, in these early conversions to Christ, a lesson on the depravity of their own hearts, that no logic, no sophistry can shake.

When infancy praises God, the aged sinner has no shelter, no excuse for his life of sin.

I shall never forget a scene in which one of these little ones that believed in Christ, was an actor.

There was an old man, more than sixty years of age, gray-headed, his body bent down with the weakness that sin had caused. For he had lived a guilty, a criminal life. Trained in the knowledge of the gospel, he had thrown away his early faith, sold his Bible for rum, and avowed himself an unbeliever,—an atheist. His bad heart was seared as with a hot iron, by his long career of iniquity. He wandered away from his home to a distant place, that he might be far away from any that knew him. He wanted to sin without reproof; and that was difficult, in the Christian village where he was born and nurtured. His own pious partner reproved him by her prayers and tears, if not by words. So he left his home and became a wanderer, and a companion of the vile.

One Sabbath day he stood at the door of a grog-shop. He had no money, and the liquor-seller refused to supply his demands for the poison. He burst into a torrent of oaths.

The little one, on his way to the Sabbath school, passed by, and heard the blasphemer. Quietly

walking up to him, he put his soft hand in that of the aged sinner, and said, with tears, "Please, Sir, do not sin so, against my Saviour!" The sinner was melted in a moment. "What," said he, "shall my gray hairs be reproved by this babe?" That day found him in the house of God; that night found him rejoicing in the forgiving mercy of his Saviour. Another day, he was far on his way to his deserted home, to cheer his family with the news that "out of the mouth of a babe, God had perfected praise." The secret of the power of youthful piety is, that no one can doubt its entire sincerity—its singleness of aim. To assume feelings men do not possess, and act in character with such hypocrisy, requires more steadiness of purpose than children often possess. So that the impression that it is *God's* work, can hardly be resisted. And what heart can resist the simple pleadings of a child's love?

I hardly need to add, that in proportion as spiritual faith revived in Home, the spirit of benevolence towards all the perishing was shown also. Even in their days of poverty, the disciples learned never to send away empty those who called for a benefit, whether for the souls or bodies of men. Covetousness departs before the presence of the Saviour. And when the Lord of the Sabbath is

honored, the day of rest is saved ; the house of His praise is holy, and his worship fills the spirit with peace.

One other illustration of the mode, in which God reached the lost, I must not omit. Those who are not under the influences of the gospel cannot be expected to prize them. And when, in addition to their lives of sin, there is a profound ignorance of the nature of the Christian faith, it is not strange that men are reluctant to pay, to support its ministers. There were multitudes in Home who felt thus. No wonder ; of what benefit had been the salaries paid to educated ministers ? They had been neglected, despised, forgotten. If they attended on their preaching, it did not address itself to their conscious want as sinners. The parson married them and buried them, and that was all. The magistrate could do the first, just as well. And it was not to the parson's credit that he spoke a few words of consolation in the hour of woe, but cared nothing for their souls at other times. There was one district, in the heart of Home, where the entire population seemed to be given over to sin. Hard drinking, brawls, profaneness, Sabbath breaking, lewdness were fearfully rife. There was not one Christian within a mile, except an infirm, paralytic old wo-

man, too far gone towards mental imbecility for usefulness. One or two, occasionally wandered to church, on a very pleasant Sabbath, to show a new bonnet, or to meet some one there for business purposes. Their hatred of an educated ministry was only equalled by their aversion to supporting one. When our spiritual pastors preached in the neighborhood, very few would come near, and no access to their hearts seemed possible. The case was well nigh hopeless.

There was dissension in one of the spiritual churches. It referred to matters of order and form, not essential to a living faith. Two or three withdrew and obtained the stated labors of one who accorded with them, to supply their spiritual wants. But they could not support him. They were poor ; he was poor. But he had an enlightened understanding and a warm heart. The condition of this desolate neighborhood deeply impressed him. But what could he do ? They would not hear him. Like Paul, in a similar case, he determined to "catch them by guile." Accustomed to the labors of the farm, he hired a tenement and a few acres of land, and became a farmer in the neighborhood. He "changed works" with them, suffered them to take the lead in conversation, listened patiently to their follies,



avoided any attack on their ignorant prejudices; but gently and humbly reproved their sins. The plain man who worked in their fields, as an hired laborer, and who asked no pay for preaching, they were willing to hear on the Sabbath. Familiar with their daily habits and feelings, he wisely adapted his preaching to their wants. He won their attention, their respect, their love. In several instances the Holy Spirit sealed his work by their conversion to Christ. Vice disappeared, the grog-shop was closed, the Sabbath respected, the people flocked to the house of prayer. Those who cared little for the word spoken, often loved the music of warm hearts and cheerful voices. The familiar *talking over* the lessons of truth, which he called the Bible class, giving them an equal chance to express their crude and often erroneous ideas, won others still. Before a year passed away, people in other parts of Home began to wonder what had so changed this desolate spot. And some of our proudest opposers of the gospel began to frequent the meetings. God was there!

When the gospel found a place in their hearts, gratitude for spiritual and social benefits received, led them to try to supply the temporal wants of their teacher. They began to see that all the

time of one who had proved himself so true a friend to their souls, might profitably be spent in the same labors. So it was no longer a selfish "hireling" that they saw in the pastor, but one who laid them under weightier obligations than money could repay, by the good conferred on them. Then, if he was to be able to meet their growing thirst for knowledge, he must have time for thought and study, or he would cease to be their fit guide. So the reign of grace and common sense began together.

## CHAPTER XIII.

A century passed—Twilight—Logic of the heart—Spiritual discernment—The “set time to favor Zion” come—The revival—The wise need teaching.

ONE HUNDRED years had passed by ; three generations of men had lived and died and gone to the judgment since the last general effusion of the Spirit of God to gather numbers at once into the kingdom of his Son. In that time, vital godliness had declined, and error usurped the place of truth, till the gospel had scarcely a name to live. Then, gradually the grace of God had brought salvation to one house after another, till hundreds once more loved the faith of the fathers, and worshipped their fathers’ God. The gospel in its purity was again preached ; the long night of stupor broken up, and few, very few, remained so entirely unacquainted with the leading doctrines of the cross, that they could sin in ignorance of them. Among those who persisted in rejecting the gospel, there were very few who had not, often without being aware of it, imbibed some of its ideas. Religious knowledge had increased, all admitted.

The teachers of error no longer avoided the use of the words that expressed sound doctrine. They even talked and prayed for a "revival of religion," and began to mark more carefully a distinction between the worldly moral man and the true disciple. No matter if the difference was not clearly defined; still it was a great advance to admit that there was one; and to have even teachers urge men to become Christians, and live holy lives, who had long been satisfied with a mere formal profession of faith and outward morality; nay, had long been *taught* to believe that no change of heart was needed by any but the vicious.

Their zeal for every form of social reformation became marked. Their labors to make men benevolent in life, if not very successful, still did some good. For the warm sympathies elicited, and the habits of right action formed, brought some minds under the control of the principles of holy living. The struggle to be less selfish, shows men that there is deeper depravity within them than they had been conscious of. They are led to pray for help, first, and then for mercy. The consciousness of guilt, the feeling that they do not *deserve* the good they receive, or the mercy they ask, leads them to ask in the name of Jesus. Their sense of dependence on him for peace of

conscience gradually makes him the object of worship, of adoring love. Then the glories of his divine character, as the revealed and revealing Deity are seen, and they become spiritual worshippers of "Him that sitteth upon the throne, and of the Lamb." The ideas of the reasoning intellect may or may not keep pace with this *logic of the heart*. But some progress is secured always. The need of prayers becomes an admitted fact. The teaching of the Holy Spirit is sought, is found. So holy affections correct the faith, and correct, ideal faith purifies and gives power to holy affections towards God and man.

Another result of this twilight state is, that numbers are led to unite with the churches. The pastors become solemn in their preaching, arouse many consciences, and excite emotion in many hearts. Their intellectual views of truth are not clear or correct enough to lead most of these awakened persons, at once, to the Saviour. They have a sense of sin, more or less strong; a feeling of their obligation to holy living, in the same proportion; and they pray for mercy; they become active in such forms of doing good to men as are set before them as duty. This secures some degree of peace of mind. It is peace derived from religious sources. It is new to them. The pastor bids them hope, believe, rejoice, and openly

profess their Christian faith. United with the church, they sometimes continue to make progress, sometimes become dead. If the work of grace, or renewed and holy affections is really begun, there is progress in experience and in ideal views of divine truth. If there are no gracious affections; if it has been merely the awakened conscience, checking, for a moment, the power of a selfish heart, the result is blindness and—what is called by a strange misnomer—*spiritual pride*! It is a satisfaction with ourselves, and a feeling of security, based on supposed attainments in divine life which have no reality. The pride of the heart is not subdued; sin may be refined, but it reigns, still, in undiminished power. I know such “spiritual pride” may exist, at times, when the heart has really felt the power of divine grace; but it is the habitual state of mind in the unconverted professor of religion, so long as he remains unconscious of his want of true piety. Would God, that none but the teachers of error were found in this state of twilight! Do not many, who intellectually receive the truth, equally fail to mark the difference between the awakened and the converted? Between the work of the conscience, and the effects of holy love? The alarms and remorse of a guilty conscience may cease, and calm and peace follow, without

the existence of any holy affections. How many, in that state, are encouraged to hope they are Christians! How many mistake the hopes and peace that they thus obtain, for those which arise in the pardoned man's bosom! The rule of duty is this:—encourage no man to hope he is converted and forgiven, till the existence of holy affections appears to be morally certain. Men are ready enough to hope, to build on a false foundation, without prompting. But the more thoroughly they are tested, in the outset, the better for their stability, if they are Christians; the better for them and for the church, if they are not.

Without such skill to “discern between the righteous and the wicked,” no soundness of creed or forms of worship will prevent the church from being filled up with worldly persons. The pastor should be, not merely converted, but a matured Christian. “Not a novice,” because he is unfit for the duties of the calling. Zeal may abound, he may desire to do good, his heart may be right, but still he be very unfit for the work. I suppose none will doubt that our Saviour was *fitted* to preach the gospel at ten years of age. He waited till he was thirty, before he began. It was not for want of holiness or knowledge, or power to read men's hearts. The example is worth the



attention of those who think and say that "half of life is wasted if a man does not begin to preach till thirty." The example may not be binding, but is safe.

"The set time to favor Zion," had come. Why? Because the way of the Lord had been thoroughly prepared. The truth was known. Its power over the conscience was generally established. Its general obligations were no longer disputed. The power of *sympathy* could now act on a multitude, at once. So that, when the Holy Spirit began to awaken a man, every external influence was no longer arrayed against his conversion. It was no more an effort to make flowers bloom in the desert; it was to cultivate fruit in a garden. Holy living had settled the question, in all minds, of the power of the gospel to transform the human character, and make it lovely, in every condition of life. The conflict was now, chiefly, the *direct issue* between the admitted claims of Christ, and the love of sin in the heart.

Now the God of our fathers remembered his gracious covenant; and the prayers of many generations came up before him, as sweet incense; and he sent down his Holy Spirit in genial showers.

There is sometimes a marked incident to designate the visible commencement of such displays of grace. It may be a sudden death; a new

preacher, the conversion of an old man, or a child, or the death of a sinner. Here it was not so. The faithful pastors diligently pursued the round of labor, teaching the young, warning the old, comforting the afflicted, succoring the tempted. One day, without the least previous indication of change, as a pastor was at work in his garden, a young man approached and desired to converse with him alone. He was intelligent, moral, acquainted with the truth, but full of high hopes of worldly honor.

“Have you anything very particular to say? you see I am freeing my garden from its weeds.” There had been no conversion for some time. The pastor expected an invitation to attend a wedding. But as he spoke, he glanced a second time at the young man’s face, and saw his lips quiver, and his eyes red with weeping. Trembling himself with new emotions he said, “come into my study;” and led the way. The young man’s heart was full. He wanted only to know how he should find salvation from sin. They talked, they wept, they knelt, they prayed; and the young man arose, and went down to his house justified; for the Saviour was revealed to him.

The pastor returned to his garden; but in vain he tried to pluck the weeds; his heart was too

full, "Is God, in very deed, in our midst, and I knew it not?"

That night there was a meeting for prayer in a remote corner of the town. The pastor attended, and found every seat filled, every eye attentive, every face expressive of some unwonted emotion. His words of exhortation were answered by silent tears, from more than one who never before wept for sin. An old man, not a disciple, when the meeting was over, rose and asked that Christians would pray for him. He had long lived in sin, but now, he said, he knew not why, he felt a deep anxiety to learn if there was a way for him to be saved. Perhaps the pastor would be willing to preach there the next evening, if he would come down for him, in his waggon? The pastor joyfully assented. Some others sought to speak to him, and an hour was passed in imparting counsel to those who were more or less awakened.

The pastor returned home, deeply humbled. It was not that he was conscious of any want of fidelity to his duties. But he had labored without much fruit. Others, too, had labored there before him, and called it a hard field, because so little visible fruit followed their toils. But now God had come. Others sowed, he was to shout the harvest home!

As he entered his dwelling, his wife remarked, "Who do you think has been here? It is Doctor

——, and he is deeply convinced of his sins. I told him you would see him before you slept, if you were not too much exhausted. I hope you will go ; it is only nine.”

The house was a mile distant in another course. So here, in a single day, were proofs of the presence of the Holy Spirit in these distant sections of the town. A few days more showed that it was so everywhere. As God had scattered the earlier fruits of faith in all parts of the place, that the word of life might be held forth before all eyes ; so now, in every part, the blessings followed. The greater number, however, were found in those districts where pastoral neglect, in other days, had left whole neighborhoods to perish without the gospel.

In every place where the truth was preached, the following Sabbaths witnessed the presence of the Holy One. The means of instruction were multiplied, to meet the wants of the people, but not so as to interfere with the discharge of the ordinary duties of life. Such a course is almost always wise. The object of the pastor is to make men something more and better than meeting-goers. They are to be *every-day* Christians. And a religious life begun with an attendance on meetings every day or night for three months, is

not the most likely to prove a life of holy usefulness. Besides, such a course is quite as likely to rouse more feeling than thought, and to result in the substitution of love for *meetings*, for the love of Christ. There is no universal rule, in such cases ; but the safest general one is, not to hinder the discharge of men's daily duties, any further than a regard to the state of individual minds makes it needful. And much observation has convinced me, that, with very few exceptions indeed, there is no gain in having awakened persons lay aside their ordinary avocations, any further than their own, irrepressible anguish may, at times, compel it. The storm is more impressive ; but, as a matter of taste, I prefer the gentle rain. It is quite as efficient in covering the fields with rich harvests.

It is important, too, to avoid one frequent tendency noticed in revivals : viz., a tendency to make religion consist in emotions only. Thus many are filled with hopes and joys, without changing, in any material respect, the principles of their daily life. Their religion is for Sundays and holidays ; for special occasions, for sickness, for death. But their business, their commerce with mankind, their social life, are conducted on the same principles of worldly prudence and propriety as before, with little or no infusion of benevolence or self-denial. They pray according to

Scripture, and "sell lumber," as they did before. *The severing of religion from life, fills up our churches with unconverted persons, just as surely, and even more rapidly, than those errors that wrought such evil in the days of our fathers.*

The work of grace in Home went on, not without some excitement, but with little opposition, for many months. A few were converted who had before this, had little knowledge of the truth. But the most of the converts were those who were already ripe for the harvest. Such of the Sabbath scholars as had not been already acquainted with Christ, were among the earliest to receive him. Then the steady attendants on worship, and then others, less constantly under the influences of grace, though still enough so, to show them their hearts were brought nigh to the blood that cleansed them from sin. There were more young men, than persons of any other class; but every age supplied some who had become children of God. Lispering infancy sung God's praises, and gray hairs bowed before the Son of God. So, too, persons of every grade of intellect and every degree of knowledge, were united to the common Saviour by the same bonds of faith and love. Brotherly love, humility, charity abounded.

Such scenes had long been unknown in Home. How did the hearts of a few rejoice; a few of

those who thirty years before had lived in the darkness that might be felt, without sympathy, without social prayer, without a faithful ministry, or any means of grace, save such as the solitude of a worldly church may supply! They read, they prayed, they wept alone! And now God had given a great company the saving faith of the gospel; and living churches walked in gospel order and purity.

It is yet too soon to speak of the matured results of such a work. Its subjects are all living. The instruction of the young, the family altar, works of benevolence and charity, all the common duties of religion and life are faithfully performed. The first fruit is holy. The ripened fruit will be so. Still it is better to praise the dead than the living. Their account is sealed up; their sins and trials are ended; their reward is begun; and their works follow them. Of these we can judge. The living may be even more holy; but they may also be the "sounding brass, or the tinkling cymbal," a glittering show, or a pleasant sound. We should judge ourselves, rather than each other. Then shall we not be condemned with the wicked.

The work of grace had reached the limits of the circle of prepared minds. Then it ceased to draw new persons into its waves. Here were an hundred new and tender plants to be nurtured and



matured for life and glory. Every individual mind needs watching, care, instruction adapted wisely to its wants. It is a work of infinite moment. Their usefulness depends on it. If they are trained to holy living, and the fruits of grace abound in them, very soon another, and perhaps a larger class of minds will be brought within the control of sympathy, and the laws of the mind and the grace of the Spirit, will unite in bringing many more sons and daughters unto glory. In due season the laborers shall reap, if they faint not.

One thing was worthy of remark. All men, when awakened, are like children, needing instruction. No matter how well acquainted they may be with the truths of religion, they need sympathy and guidance as much as if they had never heard the way of life. They are to learn over again all the circle of divine truths, with reference to the emotions of the heart. Their precious familiarity with truth, makes it easy to learn, easy to guide them ; but a guide they need, and they are conscious of it.

It was remarkable to see how men of strong intellect and high standing, showed the honor they had secretly paid to eminent piety, when far from it themselves. When they were awakened, they did not always seek the counsel of the educated, or of the pastors. But they sent for the holy and

humble, those whose life was evidently a life of faith. Their counsel, not always clothed in classic language, they received with the simplicity of little children. They wanted, not the logic of the strong mind, or the poetry and philosophy of religion, but its simple elements, such as an humble heart must know, and which, most surely, resulted from the teaching of the Spirit. This was especially noticed in some literary persons who had been willing votaries of error. They seemed more anxious to avoid a second deception, than even to be saved! Fervent piety, a heart that had known sin and the Saviour, and a mind honest to utter its convictions, were what they sought. Their choice of a counsellor showed how well they had marked the power of the gospel, at a time when they denied its truths. Convinced of sin, their intellectual errors had no power over them. "Don't argue with me," said one, "about the atonement. I can out argue you. But I find I am a lost sinner, and need pardon. How shall I obtain it?" When the mind is in such a state, it is an easy task to point to the Lamb of God that takes away sin.

The work of grace had employed the hands and hearts of all who loved Christ, in the different sects of true Christians. Love had broken down

all barriers of their diversities of creed. To win souls to the cross of Christ was their joy. And it was pleasant to see, that there was no strife for the converts. Quietly they were allowed to profess their faith wherever their tastes or views might lead them. A few united with the old churches, thus increasing the amount of spiritual life in them, and hastening the day of their return to the faith of our fathers. Surrounded by living Christians, whose pure faith and holy life were everywhere known, there was less danger that these should be injured by mingling with the worldly church. The degree of life within and the holy influence from without, would keep their feet from the paths of sin. Their growth in grace might be less rapid, but it was not likely to cease. Some, too, of the sons of Home remember and rejoice, that the old churches still stand, even in the view of the civil law, on the basis of the old, evangelical covenants. They have been laid aside, forgotten; but no creed of error has ever been adopted; no formal rejection of the truth ever occurred. One day the old foundations will again be built upon, with living stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.

## CHAPTER XIV.

“THE EARLY LOVED, THE EARLY LOST.”

I. *The Cousins.*

“Wait for me, cousin! You are not going home alone, through the woods.”

“Oh, never fear for me! Woods? Why here is only a glorious bower, for more than a quarter of a mile! These old button-wood trees, and the oaks and walnuts beyond, what a perfect arch of living green they make, as far as the eye can reach! And then the rest of the way is through the open pasture, and fields, till I get close to the back gate of our garden. So I don’t need you, at all. And then, the stars shine so bright, through every opening of this green canopy, that there will be no need of lamps to light me. I shall run, too, like a deer. I—” Something very much like a kiss stopped all further utterance.

I am not going to write a love story, not a word of it, though it begins with a kiss! The young pair were cousins, and orphans. They had been play-

mates from infancy. From the time when they braided their hair together so that the scissors had to be used to separate them, till now, they had shared every joy, hope, every little grief, every present. I don't believe they had many thoughts that were not common property. A secret neither could keep without each other's help! From the day when her tongue first could lisp, "tosen, tiss me," till the sad day when death silenced that sweet voice, they never met or parted without the kiss of affection. As for loving each other; why they never did anything else! But it never occurred to either of them to take time to say so. They were both orphans, from early infancy. As they grew up, that linked them together more closely. They were cousins, friends, brother and sister, everything to each other, but lovers.

Their first letters were written to each other; and in every little absence they had been faithful correspondents. Not a movement of the lip of each, but was told to the other. So they were a model of *cousinly* love?

He had been absent a few months, and had found the Saviour. Just now they had been attending a social meeting in the dear old house where so many happy hours of childhood were passed together. He had been telling his youthful associates

of the love of Christ, and exhorting them to flee to the same refuge for the guilty. Her eyes had been filled with tears more than once. Indeed, tho' he *spoke* to others, every word was *meant* for her, as much as if no other had been there. It was a matter of course, that he should walk home with her. And it was quite plain that all her talking about this "glorious grove," the "stars," and "running like a deer," was only to hide her emotion. It was the first feeling she had ever wished to hide from her cousin!

They walked down the lane, arched over with the noble shade trees, and the thick grove beyond. He was trying to persuade her to become a Christian that very night. He hardly doubted of his success; it was so easy to love Christ! Besides, when had they ever had one separate joy?

And what was the feeling she wished to hide? It was a sorrow that her cousin had become a Christian! Not that the fact grieved her; oh no! For the world she would not have had it otherwise. But, now, he had feelings, hopes, joys in which she did not share! He had been imbibing the truths of the gospel, and received them in love; while she had learned to mingle much error with the same truths, and the truths had not power over her heart.

It seemed to cut asunder the love that had grown up with them from infancy.

## II. *Christ the best friend.*

A few sentences of their conversation will show its import. Their frankness was not lost.

“Oh cousin, how many times have I read every one of your letters over! It was just like coming home again, and sitting or walking with you in these old woods.”

“And I have read yours, too. And I always took delight in them till—”

“Till what, dear cousin?”

“Why, till that letter about loving Christ more than all earthly friends. It seemed as though religion was making you unnatural.”

“Oh no! But let us sit down on the rock under this nut-tree, and talk about it. Stop till I spread my handkerchief. There! So you think it unnatural?”

“Yes! I do admire and reverence God for his greatness, wisdom and power; and I feel sometimes very grateful love for his goodness to me and to all his creatures. But—he is so great, and so out of sight, that I can’t feel such warm, hearty love as—”

“As we feel for each other, cousin! Well, look



at it. Did you feel the same affection for me, hundreds of miles off, as you do now, as we sit under this dear old tree, where we have passed so many happy hours ?”

“ Oh yes, and more too ! It will make you vain to tell you how much I love you !”

“ Dear cousin, thank you ! But how much less we used to *think* of God, than of each other ! Because God was invisible, we allowed Him to pass from our thoughts, except occasionally ; though every flower we plucked, every blade of grass, every leaf in these old woods has marks of his constant presence. ‘ In him *we* live and move, and have our being.’ And then his character is certainly far more worthy of love than earthly objects can be ; is it not ?”

“ Yes, but it is so exalted ; so majestic. I feel lost, or else terrified, when I think of him in all his wisdom and holiness. Besides, most of His choicest blessings come to me through his creatures. And it seems as though, in loving them, I was grateful to Him.”

“ Ah, cousin, so I felt once. God was afar off. I believe we agreed perfectly, the last time we talked this over, at least in our feelings. But look at the command ; ‘ thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.’ Does not this mean warm affection, like ours for our friends, only stronger

and purer?" "It seems so; but I can't *feel* it." "Does not that very thing show you the need of the Mediator? When this great, invisible, perfect God, whom no man, or angel has seen or can see, puts on our nature, and reveals himself in Jesus Christ, our friend, who loved and died for us; can we not love him with perfect love? Is not personal affection for God in Christ easy? Or at least, it is possible to love perfectly one who has all the sympathies of our nature, and still in them all, shows every attribute of God. 'In him,' our loving, suffering, dying Saviour, 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' True, he has passed into the heavens, and sits on his throne of infinite power and glory. But our own nature is enthroned there. I know personal affection for the *invisible* God is impossible. But not for 'God manifest in the flesh.' Him we may love with all the passionate ardor of our natures. We are just as sure of his sympathy, as you are of mine; and yet we repose on him as the great I Am." "I see that it is so. Is that what you meant by the 'Deity of Christ,' in your letter? I read all your arguments, and thought I could answer most of them. But this is so reasonable! Why it is just what we need to bring God to us; or rather to bring us to Him, as you would say."

“ Now is not such a friend, one who teaches us truth, opens life to us, even dies for our sins, offers to secure our pardon, to help us overcome our sinful hearts, and to share with us his glory which he had with the Father before the world (kosmion, creation) was; is he not to be loved *far more warmly* than any earthly friend? And is it not very sinful in us not to love him so? Oh, cousin, give him your whole heart! If we are true to the higher laws of our nature, it must be anything but ‘unnatural’ so to love God in Christ.”

“ I will try, nay, it seems as if I could, without trying much! Good night, cousin.”

### III. *The enmity of the heart.*

The next evening they met around the old fire-side. The evening passed away in cheerful talk, intermingled with such religious discussion as was likely to rise, where nearly all were indifferent to, or did not believe the gospel. The cousins, with another sister, were left alone. She began with,

“ I find it is not so easy to love Christ, so warmly, after all. I see he is glorious, but my heart seems dead. Why don’t I feel towards him as towards you and Helen?”

“ Do you remember my letter about the enmity of the natural heart against God?” She replied

with some tears, "Yes, cousin; it was the only unkind thing I ever received from you! To tell me I hated God! It made me shudder. I never had such a feeling in my heart in my life. Helen and I both cried about it; and mother was so angry, she said I shouldn't answer it."

"You did, cousin! I hope you did not disobey your mother, in doing so."

"Oh, no; but mother thought it was just like calling me a heathen, or a great criminal. What did you mean by it?"

"You said last night it seemed very easy to love God in Christ. Did you pray to him, when you came home?"

"Yes, and at first, it seemed delightful; but then in a few moments he seemed to be just as far off as the Invisible God; and my heart would not feel love. I cannot understand myself."

"Perhaps I can help you. Have you not been my companion from infancy, sharing all our joys and sorrows together? Now if you had such *want of right* feeling in your heart towards me, as you complain of towards God, what would be true of you? Could you be said to love me? or would it be 'she hates him?' " "It would not be love, certainly."

"Has not God been present with you in every

moment, from your birth, in all the good of your life, in every breath? Has he not even revealed his *glory*, his self-denying *love*, in his dying Son, on purpose to draw your heart to him? Does he not offer you infinite blessings, through the Saviour's blood and intercession? Now if you do not feel the *warmest love* for him, what sort of a heart have you?"

She wept freely, but still urged, "I see my heart *must* be very wicked; still I never was conscious of *hating* God, I was always grateful to him, revered him, and admired his character, tho' I could not feel personal affection for him."

"Do you hate the emperor of China?"

"What a question! You are making sport of me, instead of arguing or explaining the matter."

"I never was farther from mirth in my life, dear cousin. My whole heart is full of desire to save your soul from sin. But why do you not hate the Chinese monarch? He has done neither good nor evil to you! He never crossed your wishes. God has never crossed them. He loads you with blessings. Your cultivated mind sees his excellence; but your heart does not respond with warm affection. This is a bad beginning. But look further. Does John Sanders love his mother?"

"You are very queer to-night, cousin! Why you

know he kicked her out of the house in a drunken fit, only three nights ago."

"Yet he owes that mother uniform and constant obedience, as her son. Is not his unfilial conduct a proof of enmity?" "It proves a bad heart, at least." "How much greater are your obligations to obey our heavenly Father? Yet, his very first commandment, to *love* him with all your heart, which is the basis of every other, you admit you have not obeyed. Besides; have you ever tried to obey him? I do not mean to avoid open wickedness; but have you tried, day by day, to please God, in all your thoughts, words and feelings? Have you not studied far more to please your earthly friends?" There was no answer but tears. "Well, cousin, you have made your friends your God, instead of Jehovah! It was so once with me! The human affections have been nurtured to a sinful and idolatrous extent. We have made our happiness consist in what, therefore, was displeasing to God. We have pleased ourselves, instead of obeying him. Is not this enmity? What proof of enmity can be greater than constant disobedience, where perfect love and duty are required?"

"But why don't I feel conscious of enmity, such as I feel towards men, sometimes? I see, it must be because I do not see God; he is far off, and

is not the immediate agent in my hopes or disappointments. Is that the reason?"

"Partly. But have you not been really insensible to the fact that you were living in such sinful disobedience? And have you, kind and gentle as you are to all—have you really disinterested love for one human being? Are you willing to make sacrifices to benefit a stranger who does not deserve anything but censure and contempt? Your look of surprise at the question answers for you. I know you will deny yourself for us, whom you love. But Christ died for his enemies, for those who deserved no pity, no mercy. Is not your spirit therefore really selfish?"

"My *heart* does not say yes, cousin, though I cannot answer you. It seems to rise in strong opposition, I feel, I confess, now, something as mother said she did, when your letter came."

"That only proves that it is so, my dear cousin. Your sinful heart does not love to come to the light, because it is sinful. When the light shines on the real nature of your affections, the enmity begins to come into distinct consciousness. But let us pray together, cousin. It is time to retire, and you know I have a long walk through the woods." So they parted for some months.

She wept and prayed, and, as she said, *tried* to



love God. But only became more deeply sensible of her guilt, and full of unhappiness on account of it.

#### IV. *The Mother.*

The mother did not love the gospel. She was very kind-hearted. Agreeable in her manners and conversation, she had deep-rooted enmity to the gospel. When a child died, who gave no evidence of a renewed heart, she was asked if the child—who was an adult—became a Christian before death? The answer was, “I wish not to enter any heaven where my child is not.” Maternal love was very strong; too strong for a sound judgment, even had there been right intellectual views of the truth. Her love was warmly returned by her children. In everything that respected their health, comfort, manners, education and social feelings, her sound judgment was as manifest as her maternal love. But what could even a mother teach, without the love of Christ in her own heart? In the daughter’s heart, the strongest influence that withheld her from Christ, was love to her mother. That mother would be grieved to the heart; nay, deeply offended; perhaps less kind. And so the event proved. But the daughter had a thought still more bitter. To become a Christian might separate

her from that mother forever. She could not look steadily at the idea that the mother, so loved, might die in sin and perish.

She had almost wished to perish with her mother! Experience had shown her the error of our maternal lesson. The daughter could not believe in the natural purity of her own heart. She felt that sinful affections reigned there.

And, truly, what more striking proof of the heart's alienation from God, is there, than to see thus, the best and purest of our natural affections becoming the means of hindering the salvation of those whom we best love.

The mother could not be blind to the change in the character of one child; but because another died without it, she *would* not believe it was necessary to fit the soul for heaven. To allow this, was to admit that one beloved, idolized child had perished, and might charge the loss of a soul to a mother's neglect. For the mother, while she strove to make her children amiable, had not taught them their need of a holy heart, or of faith in a crucified Saviour to obtain the pardon of their sins.

One child cherished the mother's hostility to pure religion; the other, embraced the Saviour. The last, she knew was safe; her heart determined to believe the other was so. The truth that

saved the one, condemned the other ; therefore she hated it. Perhaps her daughter, if not withdrawn from that destroying circle of an impenitent mother's love, would have wept for sin, but chosen to perish in it. Like an old school-mate, who told me once, he would rather go to hell with his father, than be saved without him. If anything was needed to show that the merely human affections do not constitute piety, such examples would be enough. The mere excess of right emotions does not change their nature ; nor would it embitter the heart against the gospel.

These natural affections are amiable with or without religion. When purified by the controlling power of *holy* love, they become far more winning than they were before. But they do not enter into the essence of holiness.

There was a mother, once, so tried as never mother was before, or will be again. The holiest, wisest, most gifted, most affectionate son a mother ever loved, hung bleeding, and filled with the anguish of the *cross*, before her eyes. She wept ; but she worshipped. She had " hid in her heart " the words that taught the meaning of his sufferings. She wept, but with all a mother's intense love in her heart, she would not take him from the cross ! He was a world's Redeemer. Loving him, as he

was worthy to be loved, she subdued her anguish, because he bade her. He was her son, no more ; but he was her Saviour. They do not seem to have met after the resurrection. So should a mother's love ever be controlled by the love of Christ ; by the higher principles of duty to God and man. Then its beauty shines forth in perfect lustre.

### V. *The Holy Family.*

There are households which one can hardly enter without feeling the presence of God. It is not so much on account of what is said, or even what is done ; but because everything is habitually said and done with a reference to the will of God. In one such family, once among the children of Home, but now residing in another place, every person who has been a member of it for any considerable period, for twenty years past, has become a child of God ; and the number has been large.

The cousins next met in that family circle. She had been invited there, to pass a season, not without some reference to her spiritual benefit. But her health was impaired by toil and study, and the labors of a school. The seeds of consumption were sown, though no one then thought of it.

The first hour was spent in comparing views of what was passing around her.

“Here is wealth,” he said, “riches in abundance, and wealth without covetousness.”

“Yes; and it seems to be used as if it all belonged, not to them, but to God; and as if all they had to do with it was to see it spent to please him, and benefit their fellow-men. I never knew anything like it before.”

“Here is refinement, too, in social life.”

“It is so; and yet there is something more about it that I can hardly describe. Every one seems to be so gentle; yet they are as firm as a rock, in what is right. Their refinement seems to me to result from the feelings of their hearts; or, I should say, from trying to imitate Christ.”

“They are certainly very amiable.”

“Some of them, they tell me, cousin, were not so, naturally. And there is J., as amiable a person as I ever saw; but she does not seem to be governed by the same feelings as the rest. Somehow, her amiability seems to be of a lower grade than theirs. It has no principle in it. Her manners are pleasing, because she wishes to please. With the others, it is because they seek to do good, and to win others to Christ. Her temper was naturally gentle and social; but not more so than P’s. Yet he seems to be far purer in heart. He seems to have God always before him.”

“Is he always serious and sedate?”

“Oh no; sometimes he is very merry, and full of wit and humor. But he makes it his rule never to allow himself to get into a state of mind that unfits him for prayer; that is, for the immediate presence of God.”

“Is the family a reading and intelligent one?”

“None more so. Elegant literature is not forgotten. Look around you, at those piles of books, charts, pictures, music—they all love music—you see here proofs of both intelligence and social enjoyment.

“Then, too, there is the same cheerfulness both in sickness and health; though I never saw a more tenderly attached circle. They pray, when others would weep. That seems to make them happy in the sorest trial.”

“Are they fond of society?”

“Very. Some of them are the ornaments of the social circle. But then Christ seems never absent from their minds. It is not because they are always talking of religion. Far from it. But all they do say of it seems to *flow naturally* out of the heart, as if it was both perfectly familiar and habitually loved. There are no *set speeches* about it. It is all natural. No one of them has ever took me aside to talk, in form, respecting my

soul. Yet they all seemed to know just what I wanted, and when I needed a word in season. Oh, 'tis such a heaven to live in such a family !”

“ And does your own heart fully respond to the lessons of such a life ?”

“ Yes, my Saviour has revealed his love to me ; and I trust is formed in me, the hope of glory. If I could always live, it seems to me I should grow fast in knowledge and holiness. But I must return home the next month.”

The holy living had been a teacher that dispersed all the clouds of sin and error.

Here was a piety that manifestly was something more than the best display of the natural sympathies of the human heart. These were seen—seen exalted, purified, and controlled by holy love. It was the aim of each to be like Christ. That secured excellence in everything. All knowledge, every wish, every thought was controlled with habitual reference to the mind of Christ. Trained awhile in such a school, she returned again to the paternal roof ; returned, alas, to die.

#### VI. *She sleeps.*

Yet two years passed away, before the Lord called her. Two years of pain—of constant suffering. Two years of gentleness, like that of a



dove ; of meekness, like that of Moses ; of patience that seemed drawn from the very fountain of divine love. There was no eager display of zeal. It was clothed with humility. It patiently waited the fit occasion to warn the sinner. But who, of all that knew the sweet sufferer, was not faithfully warned, and pointed to the Lamb of God ? There were bitter foes of the gospel about her ; they were sometimes unkind. But, like her Lord, she opened not her mouth in reproaches. Her voice was, " Father, forgive them ! " If there was one thought of pain, as to her future, it was, not of dying, but of having lived uselessly. Fear not, blessed saint ! There is not one of all that saw thy holy dying, but feels the need of *holy living*, to be prepared for a place so holy as that where thou now dwellest !

Bed of death ? It was the couch of state, the scene of glorious triumph. It was only one of Heaven's opened doors, to let in a spirit already washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Shall we weep, because the beloved companion from infancy was glorified with the glory Christ had prepared for her, and so well prepared her to receive ?

Awhile she seemed to sleep ; her eyelids closed ; there was no motion ; but now and then a smile

of more than earthly beauty passed over the features as she left this sorrowing world.

We cannot always, or often, form any correct judgment of the character by the scenes of the sick bed, or the death struggle. Medicine often gives a quiet that is mistaken for the peace of God. Oftener still the feebleness of disease makes the mind calm, because it is not capable of thought or emotion. And this is called resignation! But sometimes heaven is so clearly opened to the vision of the living, that it brings the celestial city very near indeed.

I care little how I die, if I may have the love of Christ in my heart, while living and capable of securing him. A death even of joy is no proof of the salvation of the soul, on which we can rely, unless the holy life has shown the dying one's hopes to be founded on the Rock of Ages. Nay, I believe God so orders it, in his Providence, that most of those who perish, shall die with little suffering. He does it in pity to the survivors, that the anguish of their spirits may not be too great to bear. Who could endure, every time a sinner dies in his sins, to see hell as visibly opened, as heaven sometimes is when the souls of God's holy ones are called to his presence? To hear the first wail of anguish, as we hear the first note

of the songs of heaven? So we are bidden to "live unto the Lord," and then we know we shall die unto him, and be glorified together with him. But if we live unto ourselves, our death will not open heaven to us, though it may seem to be peaceful, or even joyful. "Be not deceived! God is not mocked. What a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

## CHAPTER XV.

Diversities of character—Causes—Natural gifts differ—Feelings vary—Education—Preaching—The metaphysicians—Course of Providence; Facts—Diversities of belief. Illustrations—Sources of error—All truths saving—"The same Spirit"—*Our Home above.*

THOSE who wish to excuse their own departure from, or indifference to the truths of the gospel, often say: "That we can no more expect men to think and feel alike, than we can expect them to look alike." There is both truth and error in the remark; a great error, and a most important truth.

Except in a few cases of unnatural deformity, the essential features of every man are the same. The essential elements of a holy character must be the same, in all who have holy hearts. The facts, or truths respecting God, man, redemption and eternity, cannot possibly vary with all men's various and ever changing views respecting them.

Still, there is a most wonderful diversity of character and experience, among those who are real Christians, who do show that they are governed by holy love to God and man. And to trace the

causes and results of this diversity, is one of the most important and useful of all studies, to the practical Christian. It requires volumes, instead of a chapter. But the lessons of life in Home would be incomplete, without some hints on the subject.

A large number of Christians are very ill qualified to analyze, or describe the emotions of their own hearts at the time of their conversion. They are too excited, too confused. There is a rush of new and strange emotions, no one of which is distinct enough for description. They are not used to observing such things in themselves or others. And very few men can easily tell even what they do know, with entire accuracy. With such persons, everything they can recall, connected in any way with their experience, becomes a part of it. One dream is given by the Holy Spirit ; the trance which can as easily be produced by other means, as by religious influences, becomes an opening of heaven to their view. So they think ; and it is in vain to argue them out of it. This is the source of many an error, many a fond delusion. Men will not part with that which seems to be so inwrought into their experiences, and so connected with their hopes of heaven. Hence the immense value of minute statements of all the varied experiences of the Christian, evil as well as good. It would be found that most of the controversies

among true Christians, respecting the elements of a holy life and character, grow out of this variety in their several experiences.

I listened once to a very minute narrative of the conversion of more than one hundred educated men, given in successive weeks, for the very purpose of mutual instruction. The variety was wonderful. There were only six, whose experience was much alike, either in respect to the causes or the details of the change God had wrought in them. Minute acquaintance with many more cases, has only increased my knowledge of these diversities.

The causes of them were many.

(1) Differences of intellectual powers. The reasoning intellect, delighting to trace effects to causes, and follow the cause in its results, generally connected its experience with some of the higher principles of the divine government. It would be in vain to reason against the sovereignty of God, with a mind of this class, into whose every thought and feeling, the truths designated by that term had become incorporated, not only by an intellectual perception of their divine harmony, but by their power in purifying the soul from sin. Equally vain the efforts to make such doctrines valuable to minds not so constituted will generally prove.

The class of minds that reasoned most from *effects to causes*, habitually traced all events in life and nature, to God. His will, his hand, was seen in everything, good and evil, and devoutly recognized with an humble, submissive spirit.

Minds that commonly reasoned from causes to effects, were more employed in tracing the harmony of the principles of God's government, especially if their powers of analysis were connected with the power of comparing with accuracy, the results of their researches. With them, the reception of the truth did not result from submission to divine teaching, so much as from a perception that that teaching was reasonable, and in keeping with all known truths.

The poetic mind almost always was most impressed with the atonement ; the glory of the revealed Godhead ; with the majesty of the cross ; the resurrection and mediation and reign of the Redeemer glorified ; and with other themes that appealed to the mind's perception of sublimity, beauty and perfection.

(2) There were still more diversities from natural feelings and sentiments.

A naturally conscientious mind was impressed with the obligations of the Law of God. Justice, right and duty, as violated by a life of disobedience, humbled the soul.



A proud mind, or one, more correctly speaking, naturally respecting itself highly, was most impressed with the meanness, and loathsome turpitude of sin.

One in whom the love of the favor of others was the ruling element, was most solicitous to *please* God, and to be the object of his smile of favor. That feeling drew him from the paths of sin.

The naturally generous and self-sacrificing were won sometimes by the benevolence of the gospel. It was so noble to give up all for Christ, that they could not refrain from doing it. The naturally timid, shrinking from pain and suffering, were often awakened by simple fear of divine wrath against sin. The judgments of God led them to learn righteousness.

A mind to which mathematics seemed to be the very aliment of life, was awakened by the effects of the investigations of La Place on his mind, in demonstrating the wisdom of God, and his universal agency.

Others, whose affections were very strong, were awakened by the influence of love for a mother, wife, or other beloved friends. To please them, they first sought to please God, by doing his will. In short, there was hardly any one power of the

mental, social and moral constitution of man, that did not become *the agent* in the conversion of the soul to God ; and so distinctly, that the convert could not relate his history, without showing it to all.

(3) The various education persons receive, gives still other varieties. This, however, tends greatly to make the diversities that result from natural character less striking, though not always. Sometimes the bent of the mind in one direction is so strong, that it has the power of assimilation ; it converts to its own uses all the efforts made to impart knowledge, or to elicit other mental powers and resources. It was seen, however, that the well educated mind, generally, had a higher regard for the *truths* of religion ; the uneducated, for the *feelings* it inspires. With the first, to be right was the prime object ; with the last, it was to feel deeply whatever was believed.

(4) The character of the preaching to which they had been accustomed, had a marked effect. If it was didactic reasoning, their minds had the same tendency. If it was poetic, the beauty of religion inflamed them. If it dealt more with the various emotions of the sinful or holy heart, so their religion became more decidedly that of experience, rather than thought or action. When the character of the preaching corresponded with the natu-

ral tendencies of the individual mind, the result was very marked and beneficial—though not always. One very acute metaphysical mind, trained by a pastor of the same mental character, had become a sort of metaphysical monomaniac! It analyzed its emotions and principles, till they lost half their legitimate power over the soul. I believe the lessons of affliction have since corrected that tendency; for he is now a very practical man. In another instance, the same cause, acting on a mind so constituted, appears to have kept the sinner from God. His whole mental energy was absorbed in the philosophy of truth, till it lost all power to subdue the heart! I never knew so accurate a judge of what was *exactly true*, as that sinner! But a long life of sin, under the constant, nay, eager attendance on all the means of grace, proved that the truth failed to reach his heart.

(5) The course of Providence with individuals, was equally marked in their conversion.

Gratitude for prosperity subdued one. The loss of a tenderly loved relative broke the heart of another, and he sought consolation in Christ. Yet the conversions that resulted from sanctified affliction, or fear, were very few.

There were striking instances of this. One, on a bed of sickness, when friends and physicians had

bid him prepare for a speedy exchange of worlds, vowed to God that he would serve him, if life should be spared. Life was granted; and for a brief space the vow was redeemed, in form; while the impulse of gratitude lasted. But the heart was not subdued; and long years of folly and sin were passed before some other influence brought the sinner to the cross.

Another, when the cholera raged around, was filled with fears of death. For a year or two, there was prayer, devotion, and all the outward marks of a religious life. But years of worldly and selfish living followed, when the pestilence ceased to walk in darkness, or waste the powers of life at noon-day.

A son, carefully trained to believe and reverence the truths and precepts of the Bible, came to me once to ask guidance to the cross. Thrown into the whirl of the city, surrounded by those who neither loved nor respected the truth, the effects of their mockeries on his own mind, in lessening his own reverence for sacred things, alarmed him. He said he felt he must become a child of God, or he should lose all respect for what his education and his judgment both led him to regard as the truth of God. So he wisely decided to make Christ his friend.

Another had long been engaged in the rum traffic. His shop had been a perfect curse to a whole neighborhood of Home. Sickness came; and while on his bed some facts occurred that illustrated the horrible results of his own business in such a way that he could not close his eyes to it. Remorse seized upon him; and a desire to repair the evils he had done in his selfish pursuit of gain, led him to consecrate himself and all his to the Lord.

(6) Diversities of religious belief had the same marked effect. There seemed to be no one idea of the whole circle of truth which was not employed to convert the soul; no idea, the intellectual rejection of which prevented the agency of the Holy Spirit in using what truth *was* embraced, for the salvation of the soul. A Deist, who utterly rejected Divine revelation, was awakened by reflections on the goodness of God. He often meditated on the subject, and supposed he loved the God of nature. One day the contrast between the Divine benevolence, as shown in hundreds of instances, where the mere wish to confer happiness must have been the sole motive for providing for it, and his own selfish character, struck him with such power, that he fell on his knees and cried aloud for mercy. Trained up to despise a Bible he had never cared to examine, it was only

when many struggles with his sinful heart taught him the need of a guide, that he sought for a Testament, and for the first time, learned more of the character and mission of Christ, than could be learned from profane curses.

In another, clear views of the Divine Government, led to cordial, joyful submission and humble obedience, without the least mental reference to a Saviour, or even much thought whether pardon was received or needed at all. The sense of guilt had been very acute; the submission to justice was cordial; and the spirit of filial love and obedience filled the heart, for weeks before the Saviour was revealed in his glory. These cases settled in my mind the practicability of a heathen's conversion, by the principles of natural religion, without the gospel, "so that they are without excuse." In all the after life of this able man, in his preaching he perpetually enforced submission as the first duty, and as *the* mode of entering on the life of faith. It was a serious hindrance to the usefulness of one of the best men I ever knew. For twenty years he had preached with great ability, and lived a life of prayer. At the end of that time, he told me, that while his preaching had comforted and edified many in the church of God, he knew not that he had ever directly won

one soul to Christ ! His attention was pointed to this leading practical error in his preaching, and to the vast diversities in the mode of commencing a religious life. His methods of instruction were varied, while the same clearness in enforcing the truths of the gospel remained. His harvests of souls have since that time been constant and great.

One who intellectually rejected the Deity and atonement of Christ, was led by the Spirit to see her sins, and her need of mercy. Is was only in the progress of holy affections that Christ became her " Lord and her God."

He who had been trained to view the doctrine of election—an election not based on the foreseen conversion of the man—as abhorrent to every principle of equity, was won to Christ, by the perception of the grace that *sought him*, and brought him to Christ, while he had chosen the path of death. He wondered why he was taken, and not another ! So the very principle he rejected, brought forth its appropriate fruits of humility and gratitude in his heart, through the grace of the Spirit. So with all truths. Each has sanctifying power ; and is a sword of the Spirit to slay those forms of sin that rule the heart. So that the little child whose tender mind can



grasp but one truth, in its simplest form, may be saved by it. The feeble minded who lack the capacity to discern many truths, may be purified by what their vision sees. The worldly lover of gold, who made it his god, dreamed that he was staggering along, almost crushed by the weight of his heaped coffers. The Saviour—just as his mind, ruled by the outward senses, had seen him painted in the Cathedral of Baltimore—seemed to pass by, and in pity relieve him of the burden that was crushing out his life; and he woke to give his gold, himself and his all to that Saviour. Baptized with his Spirit, his gold is no longer a curse, but the means of a blessing to many. It was the idea of the vanity of worldly treasures to confer happiness, that broke up the selfish slumbers of his frozen heart. It is in vain to say that no one can become a Christian who has been educated, or otherwise led, intellectually to reject any particular truth, however important that may be. It is not so. If that rejection be *wilful*, *after the mind clearly sees that the doctrine is true*, the rejection of it will, no doubt, destroy the soul. So it would if the doctrine or precept were, relatively, of less importance. The deliberate rejection of any truth or duty, is a rejection of the rightful authority of the Divine teacher and Law-

giver. But such wilful sin is probably not very common. It is most frequently committed, not where errors in doctrine are taught, but where men enjoy the clear light of the gospel. Then we often see a *bitter* rejection of some single truth or duty, followed by blindness of mind, hardness of heart, and a death of shame.

The source of error, and of much inefficient preaching may be seen by an anecdote. A young man, just from a Seminary, wrote out, in a little different form, all the lectures of his theological instructors, and *preached* them to his people, in the first years of his ministry. It is hardly necessary to say, not a soul was converted. Did he not preach the truth? Yes. The whole truth? Almost! Was it not philosophically arranged, so that the harmony of every part of the system could be seen? No doubt. Even the "order of nature in the affections of the heart" was demonstrated with admirable logic and precision. But the mode of instruction in which the great intellect taught him the harmony and theory of truth, was not that which fitted it to reach the consciences, wants, feelings and sympathies of men. People said he was a 'great preacher,' but many of his most important doctrines were rejected, in spite of the irrefutable logic that sustained them.

Probably, a few minds, in some churches, might have been savingly benefited by just such preaching. But, as a *Christian*, the preacher did not *believe* his own doctrines, in the forms in which he had been preaching them. Those forms had relation to the logical intellect; none to the emotions of the heart. When he philosophized, correctly enough, on the fact that *love* was the element of all right affections, and therefore, in the *order of nature* the first holy emotion produced by the Spirit, he could not help remembering that he had been first *conscious* of penitence for sin, of submission, of hopes of mercy. When he told the fact that no man could be justified, or forgiven, without an atonement, and that pardon was granted to believers alone, he forgot that he had found peace and joy in God, while, intellectually, he had rejected the idea of an atoning Saviour. So, led by chances, beyond his control, he began to preach the same truths, as they lay in his own heart, connected with his and other men's experience as saints and sinners. Now the power of the Spirit was revealed, and the truth made many wise unto salvation.

What is the error? It is this. Men mistake a *logical necessity* for an actual need. In logic, every truth is harmonized with, and flows certain-

ly from every other truth. All reasonings of truth are reasonings in a circle. For every truth may be assumed, in turn, as a postulate, and every other drawn from it by a logic nothing can shake. But few men are logicians! You logically infer that a man *cannot* reject one truth of the circle, without rejecting other, and essential ideas, with which, in express terms, the Bible connects salvation from sin and woe. But many a man is *conscious* of holy affections, who does not believe some portions of this great circle of truth. His heart is pained. He deems you a bigot. Brotherly love ceases. Sects are formed, among those who really love the same holiness. Worse still. The true disciple becomes embittered against some valuable truths in the divine circle of light, and he loses its sanctifying power, which was intended to complete the harmony of his own Christian character. Besides; a large class of divine truths seldom have any direct relation to the first experience of the awakened sinner, and the convert. They, too, by such preaching, become hostile to truths needful to them in some other stage of their progress.

It makes no great difference what particular truth is first impressed on a sinner's mind. If his carnal heart is roused, he will quarrel with one

as readily as with another. The doctrine he quarrels with must be pressed upon his heart till he feels its subduing power. Some think that this or that doctrine is peculiarly offensive to the corrupt heart. Not so ! The doctrine that happens to disturb a man in his sins, or that, which by the habits of his mind or education, is best fitted to teach him the real nature of his sinful affections, *that* becomes the *cross* to him. To receive that, be it what it may, involves a heart of submission to the divine authority. If the Spirit of holy love once enters the heart, its reign, if not prevented, will in time control the whole intellect, as well as every feeling, “There are diversities of operations, but the *same Spirit*.”

The diversities of religious character formed are as great as the causes that enter into their formation are numerous.

One knows more truth than another. His holy character is more matured. The mental peculiarities of another are seen in the fullest development of some graces of the Spirit, while others, though not wholly wanting, are seldom seen. One is more humble and submissive ; another more zealous and joyous in hope. Meekness shines in one, holy boldness in his brother. The reception of some truths gives greater stability of character

than most who reject them possess. In one, deep and joyous emotions are deemed *the* evidences of sanctification. In another, the habitual conformity of the thoughts and wishes to the commandments of God is deemed the sure proof of holiness. Both are so, sometimes. Some characters unite both ; more separate them or give to one more preëminence, than is given to it by others equally the followers of God as dear children.

Thus, the causes that diversify the religious character at its commencement, continue to act throughout the entire life of the Christian. The love of God is in his heart. He will be saved. If his mind was equally fitted to be benefited by every revealed truth, he would be a more perfect man, a more perfect Christian. If he believed and loved the entire circle of divine truths, it would make his character complete, perfect. And, with all the hindrances he finds within and without, if he is truly taught of God, he will, in the end, reach such perfection. Where there is filial love in the heart ; a sense of guilt, and of the need of free grace ; and a teachable temper, let us never despair of seeing the child become a man. The Spirit is his teacher. " He giveth to every man, severally, as He will," just as may be needed, by the nature of the individual man, to fit him

for life here, and a more glorious life when we put on the immortal body.

How careful should we be not to cause one of the 'little ones that believe' in Christ to offend ! With what tenderness should we watch the feeblest manifestations of real holiness ! If the flax smoke ever so little, there is fire enough to kindle it. And if we reason with the heart, aiding the experience of the weak or ignorant with the truths best adapted to their wants, they will grow in grace rapidly. Every truth of the gospel is *truth* ; important truth ; invaluable in its place, and fitting time. But all truths are not alike important at all times, or for all men. The wise master builder does not use a shingle where a beam is needed, or hold up a rafter with a board nail. The storm that invigorates the oak will destroy the tender wheat. "There are diversities of gifts, by the same Spirit."

Use logic with the reasoner ; the "deep things of God" with those who have strength to receive them ; milk for babes. But with *all*, preach and teach from the experience of the heart, to the hearts of others. The man who tells me how he proves a doctrine to be true, does me little good. But he who tells me the relation of that doctrine or idea to the corresponding affections of the soul,



enables me to feed upon it, to grow in holiness, to obtain new peace and joy, and so, the better to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

Thus, in the progress of the individual mind we see the same variety of causes and results that we notice in the revival of pure religion in a whole town. In all, God, our father's God, is at work by his Spirit to bring many sons and daughters to glory, Pray, Christian, pray on, pray ever ! Pray for the fulfilment of the promise, "they shall all be taught of God." Pray that the Holy Spirit may constantly dwell in every mind, imparting his various gifts of grace, knowledge and love, to each one, according to his will, and their needs. Pray that you in no hour of your life, may be without the presence of that Spirit, till Christ be perfectly formed in you the hope of glory. Pray that He may so dwell in your children, in remembrance of His covenant, to the end of time.

A parting word. Reader, Is this world *your Home* ? Our Lord Jesus Christ, will one day come with ten thousand of his saints ; are you so forming a character like His, that he " will be admired *in you*" in that day ?

I love to think of a beautiful comparison of Stillingfleet, in the opening of his *Origines Sacrae*. In the ancient houses the offices for daily and

servile toil occupied the first floor. The rooms for family use, to *live* in, were above. Heaven, he says, is only the *upper room*, the upper room of our dwelling-place, where our life is to be passed. Here, we have servile toil, the drudgery of toil. It is only the preparation for our real life. It is no Home till we enter the permanent dwelling-place. When every power of the individual mind is fully developed, and every power, every feeling, every thought entirely governed by holy love to God and our fellows, then we are fitted for our permanent Home. There will be diversities of gifts, there. One will excel in strength, another in wisdom. One will harp with the harpers, another will sing the new song. One will ever devoutly worship, another will teach the mystery of God to those who need a guide. But all shall serve him, with perfect hearts. That makes heaven the Home of the soul. Are you reader, fitted to enter our HOME ?

END.





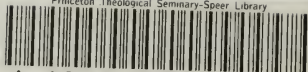








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